PEVERIL OF THE PEAK.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "WAVERLEY,

KENILWORTH," &c.

"If my readers should at any time remark that I am particularly dull, they may be assured there is a design under it."—*British Essayist.*

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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CHAPTER I.

Parents have flinty hearts! No tears can move them.
OTWAY.

When Alice Bridgenorth entered, at length, the parlour where her anxious lover had so long expected her, it was with a slow step, and a composed manner. Her dress was arranged with an accurate attention to form, which at once enhanced the appearance of its puritanic simplicity, and struck Julian as a bad omen; for although the time bestowed upon the toilette may, in many cases, intimate the wish to appear advantageously at such an interview, yet a ceremonious arrangement of attire is very much allied with for-

mality, and a preconceived determination to treat a lover with cold politeness.

The sad-coloured gown—the pinched and plaited cap, which carefully obscured the profusion of long dark-brown hair—the small ruff, and the long sleeves, would have appeared to great disadvantage on a shape less graceful than Alice Bridgenorth's; but an exquisite form, though not, as yet, sufficiently rounded in the outlines to produce the perfection of female beauty, was able to sustain and give grace even to this unbecoming dress. Her countenance, fair and delicate, with eyes of hazel, and a brow of alabaster, had, notwithstanding, less regular beauty than her form, and might have been justly subjected to criticism. There was, however, a life and spirit in her gaiety, and a depth of sentiment in her gravity, which made Alice, in conversation with the very few persons with whom she associated, so fascinating in her manners and expression, whether of language or countenance—so touching, also, in her simplicity and purity of thought, that brighter beauties might have been overlooked in her company. It was no wonder,

therefore, that an ardent character like Julian, influenced by these charms, as well as by the secrecy and mystery attending his intercourse with Alice, should prefer the recluse of the Black-Fort to all others with whom he had become acquainted in general society.

His heart beat high as she came into the apartment, and it was almost without an attempt to speak that his profound obeisance acknowledged her entrance.

"This is a mockery, Master Peveril," said Alice, with an effort to speak firmly, which yet was disconcerted by a slight tremulous inflection of voice—"a mockery, and a cruel one. You come to this lone place, inhabited only by two women, too simple to command your absence—too weak to enforce it—you come, in spite of my earnest request—to the neglect of your own time—to the prejudice, I may fear, of my character—you abuse the influence you possess over the simple person to whom I am intrusted—All this you do, and think to make it up by low reverences, and constrained courtesy! Is this ho-

nourable, or is it fair ?—Is it," she added, after a moment's hesitation—" is it kind ?"

The tremulous accent fell especially on the last word she uttered, and it was spoken in a low tone of gentle reproach, which went to Julian's heart.

" If," said he, " there was a mode by which, at the peril of my life, Alice, I could shew my regard—my respect—my devoted tenderness—the danger would be dearer to me than ever was pleasure."

" You have said such things often," said Alice, " and they are such as I ought not to hear, and do not desire to hear. I have no tasks to impose on you—no enemies to be destroyed—no need or desire of protection—no wish, Heaven knows, to expose you to danger—It is your visits here alone to which danger attaches. You have but to rule your own wilful temper—to turn your thoughts and your cares elsewhere, and I can have nothing to ask—nothing to wish for. Use your own reason—consider the injury you do yourself—the injustice you do us—and let me,

once more, in fair terms, entreat you to absent yourself from this place—till—till——"

She paused, and Julian eagerly interrupted her,—"Till when, Alice?—till when?—impose on me any length of absence which your severity can inflict, short of a final separation—Say, begone for years, but return when these years are over; and, slow and wearily as they must pass away, still the thought, that they must at length have their period, will enable me to live through them. Let me, then, conjure thee, Alice, to name a date—to fix a term—to say till *when*."

"Till you can bear to think of me only as a friend and sister."

"That is a sentence of eternal banishment indeed," said Julian; "it is seeming, no doubt, to fix a term of exile, but attaching to it an impossible condition."

"And why impossible, Julian?" said Alice, in a tone of persuasion; "were we not happier ere you threw the mask from your own countenance, and tore the veil from my foolish eyes? Did we not meet with joy, spend our time happily, and part cheerily, because we transgressed

no duty, and incurred no self-reproach? Bring back that state of happy ignorance, and you shall have no reason to call me unkind. But while you form schemes which I know to be imaginary, and use language of such violence and passion, you shall excuse me if I now, and once for all declare, that since Deborah shews herself unfit for the trust reposed in her, and must needs expose me to persecutions of this nature, I will write to my father, that he may fix me another place of residence; and in the meanwhile I will take shelter with my aunt at Kirk-Truagh."

"Hear me, unpitying girl," said Peveril, "hear me, and you shall see how devoted I am to obedience, in all that I can do to oblige you. You say you were happy when we spoke not on such topics—well—at all expence of my own suppressed feelings, that happy period shall return. I will meet you—walk with you—read with you—but only as a brother would with his sister, or a friend with his friend; the thoughts I may nourish, be they of hope or of despair, my tongue shall not give birth to, and therefore I cannot offend; Deborah shall be ever by your side, and

her presence shall prevent my even hinting at what might displease you—only do not make a crime to me of those thoughts, which are the dearest part of my existence; for believe me it were better and kinder to rob me of existence itself."

"This is the mere ecstacy of passion, Julian," answered Alice Bridgenorth; "that which is unpleasant, our selfish and stubborn will represents as impossible. I have no confidence in the plan you propose—no confidence in your resolution, and less than none in the protection of Deborah. Till you can renounce, honestly and explicitly, the wishes you have lately expressed, we must be strangers;—and could you renounce them even on this moment, it were better that we should part for a long time; and, for Heaven's sake, let it be as soon as possible—perhaps it is even now too late to prevent some unpleasant accident—I thought I heard a noise."

"It was Deborah," answered Julian. "Be not afraid, Alice; we are secure against surprise."

"I know not," said Alice, "what you mean by such security—I have nothing to hide. I sought not this interview; on the contrary, averted it as long as I could—and am now most desirous to break it off."

"And wherefore, Alice, since you say it must be our last? Why should you shake the sand which is passing so fast? the very executioner hurries not the prayers of the wretches upon the scaffold.—And see you not—I will argue as coldly as you can desire—see you not that you are breaking your own word, and recalling the hope which yourself held out to me?"

"What hope have I suggested? What word have I given, Julian?" answered Alice. "You yourself build wild hopes in the air, and accuse me of destroying what had never any earthly foundation. Spare yourself, Julian—spare me—and in mercy to us both, depart, and return not again till you can be more reasonable."

"Reasonable?" replied Julian; "it is you, Alice, who will deprive me altogether of reason. Did you not say, that if our parents could be

brought to consent to our union, you would no longer oppose my suit?"

"No—no—no," said Alice eagerly, and blushing deeply,—"I did not say so, Julian—it was your own wild imagination which put construction on my silence and my confusion."

"You do *not* say so, then," answered Julian; "and if all other obstacles were removed, I should find one in the cold flinty bosom of her who pays the most devoted and sincere affection, with contempt and dislike.—Is that," he added, in a deep tone of feeling, "is that what Alice Bridgenorth says to Julian Peveril?"

"Indeed—indeed, Julian," said the almost weeping girl, "I do not say so—I say nothing, and I ought not to say any thing concerning what I might do, in a state of things which can never take place. Indeed, Julian, you ought not thus to press me. Unprotected as I am—wishing you well—very well—why should you urge me to say or do what would lessen me in my own eyes? to own affection for one from whom fate has separated me for ever? It is ungenerous—it is cruel—it is seeking a momentary and

selfish gratification to yourself, at the expence of every feeling which I ought to entertain."

"You have said enough, Alice," said Julian, with sparkling eyes; "you have said enough in deprecating my urgency, and I will press you no further. But you overrate the impediments which lie betwixt us—they must and shall give way."

"So you said before," answered Alice, "and with what probability, your own account may shew. You dared not mention the subject to your own father—how should you venture to mention it to mine?"

"That I will soon enable you to decide upon. Major Bridgenorth, by my mother's account, is a worthy and an estimable man. I will remind him, that to my mother's care he owes the dearest treasure and comfort of his life; and I will ask him if it is a just retribution to make that mother childless. Let me but know where to find him, Alice, and you shall soon hear if I have feared to plead my cause with him."

"Alas!" answered Alice, "you well know my uncertainty as to my dear father's residence. How

often has it been my earnest request to him that he would let me share his solitary residence, or his obscure wanderings! But the short and infrequent visits which he makes to this house are all that he permits me of his society. Something I might surely do, however little, to alleviate the melancholy by which he is oppressed."

"Something we might both do," said Peveril. "How willingly would I aid you in so pleasing a task! All old griefs should be forgotten—all old friendships revived. My father's prejudices are those of an Englishman—strong, indeed, but not insurmountable by reason. Tell me, then, where Major Bridgenorth is, and leave the rest to me; or let me but know by what address your letters reach him, and I will forthwith essay to discover his dwelling."

"Do not attempt it, I charge you," said Alice. "He is already a man of sorrows; and what would he think were I capable of entertaining a suit so likely to add to them? Besides, I could not tell you, if I would, where he is now to be found. My letters reach him from time to time, by means

of my aunt Christian; but of his address I am entirely ignorant."

"Then, by Heaven," answered Julian, "I will watch his arrival in this island, and in this house; and ere he has locked thee in his arms, he shall answer to me on the subject of my suit."

"Then demand that answer now—" said a voice from without the door, which was at the same time slowly opened. "Demand that answer now, for here stands Ralph Bridgenorth."

As he spoke, he entered the apartment with his usual slow and sedate step—raised his flapp'd and steeple-crowned hat from his brows, and, standing in the midst of the room, eyed alternately his daughter and Julian Peveril with a fixed and penetrating glance.

"Father!" said Alice, utterly astonished, and terrified besides, by his sudden appearance at such a conjuncture,—"Father, I am not to blame."

"Of that anon, Alice," said Bridgenorth; "meantime retire to your apartment—I have that to say to this youth which will not endure your presence."

"Indeed—indeed, father," said Alice, alarmed at what she supposed these words indicated, "Julian is as little to be blamed as I! It was chance, it was fortune, which caused our meeting together." Then suddenly rushing forward, she threw her arms around her father, saying, "O do him no injury—he meant me no wrong! Father, you were wont to be a man of reason and of religious peace."

"And wherefore should I not be so now, Alice?" said Bridgenorth, raising his daughter from the ground, on which she had almost sunk in the earnestness of her supplication. "Doest thou know aught, maiden, which should inflame my anger against this young man, more than reason or religion may bridle? Go—go to thy chamber. Compose thine own passions—learn to rule these—and leave it to me to deal with this stubborn young man."

Alice arose, and, with her eyes fixed on the ground, retired slowly from the apartment. Julian followed her steps with his eyes till the last wave of her garment was visible at the closing door; then turned his looks to Ma-

jor Bridgenorth, and then sunk them on the ground. The Major continued to regard him in profound silence; his looks were melancholy and even austere; but there was nothing which indicated either agitation or keen resentment. He motioned to Julian to take a seat, and assumed one himself. After which, he opened the conversation in the following manner:—

"You seemed but now, young gentleman, anxious to learn where I was to be found. Such I at least conjectured, from the few expressions which I chanced to overhear; for I made bold, though it may be contrary to the code of modern courtesy, to listen a moment or two, in order to gather upon what subject so young a man as you entertained so young a woman as Alice, in a private interview."

"I trust, sir," said Julian, rallying spirits in what he felt to be a case of extremity, "you have heard nothing on my part which has given offence to a gentleman, whom, though unknown, I am bound to respect so highly."

"On the contrary," said Bridgenorth, with the

same formal gravity, "I am pleased to find that your business is, or appears to be, with me, rather than with my daughter. I only think you had done better to have entrusted it to me in the first instance, as my sole concern."

The utmost sharpness of attention which Julian applied, could not discover if Bridgenorth spoke seriously or ironically to the above purpose. He was, however, quick-witted beyond his experience, and was internally determined to endeavour to discover something of the character and the temper of him with whom he spoke. For that purpose, regulating his reply in the same tone with Bridgenorth's observation, he said, that not having the advantage to know his place of residence, he had applied for information to his daughter.

"Who is now known to you for the first time?" said Bridgenorth. "Am I so to understand you?"

"By no means," answered Julian, looking down; "I have been known to your daughter for many years; and what I wished to say, respects both her happiness and my own."

"I must understand you," said Bridgenorth, "even as carnal men understand each other on the matters of this world. You are attached to my daughter by the cords of love; I have long known it."

"You, Master Bridgenorth?" exclaimed Peveril—"*You* have long known it?"

"Yes, young man. Think you, that as the father of an only child, I could have suffered Alice Bridgenorth—the only living pledge of her who is now an angel in heaven—to have remained in this seclusion without the surest knowledge of all her material actions? I have, in person, seen more, both of her and of you, than you could be aware of; and when absent in the body, I had the means of maintaining the same superintendance. Young man, they say that such love as you entertain for my daughter teaches much subtlety; but believe not that it can overreach the affection which a widowed father bears to an only child."

"If," said Julian, his heart beating thick and joyfully, "if you have known this intercourse

so long, may I not hope that it has not met your disapprobation?"

The Major paused for an instant, and then answered, "In some respects, certainly not. Had it done so—had there seemed aught on your side, or on my daughter's, to have rendered your visits here dangerous to her, or displeasing to me, she had not been long the inhabitant of this solitude, or of this island. But be not so hasty as to presume, that all which you may desire in this matter can be either easily or speedily accomplished."

"I foresee, indeed, difficulties," answered Julian; "but with your kind acquiescence, they are such as I trust to remove. My father is generous—my mother is candid and liberal. They loved you once, I trust they will love you again. I will be the mediator betwixt you—peace and harmony shall once more inhabit our neighbourhood, and——"

Bridgenorth interrupted him with a grim smile; for such it seemed, as it passed over a face of deep melancholy. "My daughter well

said, but short while past, that you were a dreamer of dreams—an architect of plans and hopes fantastic as the visions of the night. It is a great thing you ask of me;—the hand of my only child—the sum of my worldly substance, though that is but dross in comparison. You ask the key of the only fountain from which I may yet hope to drink one pleasant draught; you ask to be the sole and absolute keeper of my earthly happiness—and what have you offered, or what have you to offer, in return of the surrender you require of me?"

"I am but too sensible," said Peveril, abashed at his own hasty conclusions, "how difficult it may be."

"Nay, but interrupt me not," replied Bridgenorth, "till I shew you the amount of what you offer me in exchange for a boon, which, whatever may be its intrinsic value, is earnestly desired by you, and comprehends all that is valuable on earth which I have it in my power to bestow You may have heard, that in the late times I was the antagonist of your father's principles and his

profane faction, but not the enemy of his person."

"I have ever heard," replied Julian, "much the contrary; and it was but now that I reminded you that you had been his friend."

"Ay. When he was in affliction and I in prosperity, I was neither unwilling, nor altogether unable, to shew myself such. Well, the tables are turned—the times are changed. A peaceful and unoffending man might have expected from a neighbour, now powerful in his turn, such protection when walking in the paths of the law, as all men, subjects of the same realm, have a right to expect even from perfect strangers. What chances? I pursue, with the warrant of the King and law, a murtheress, bearing on her hand the blood of my near connexion, and I had, in such case, a right to call on every liege subject to render assistance to the execution. My late friendly neighbour, bound, as a man and a magistrate, to give ready assistance to a legal action—bound, as a grateful and obliged friend, to respect my rights and my person—thrusts himself betwixt me—me, the avenger of

blood—and my lawful captive; beats me to the earth, at once endangering my life, and, in mere human eyes, sullying mine honour; and under his protection, the Midianitish woman reaches, like a sea-eagle, the nest which she hath made in the rocks, and remains there till gold, duly administered at court, wipes out all memory of her crime, and baffles the vengeance due to the memory of the best and bravest of men.—But," he added, apostrophizing the portrait of Christian, "thou art not yet forgotten! The vengeance which dogs thy murtheress is slow,—but it is sure!"

There was a pause of some moments, which Julian Peveril, willing to hear to what conclusion Major Bridgenorth was finally to arrive, did not care to interrupt. Accordingly, in a few minutes the latter proceeded.—"These things," he said, "I recal not in bitterness, so far as they are personal to me—I recal them not in spite of heart, though they have been the means of banishing me from my place of residence, where my fathers dwelt, and where my earthly comforts lie interred. But the public cause

sets farther strife betwixt your father and me. Who so active as he to execute the fatal edict of black Saint Bartholomew's day, when so many hundreds of gospel-preachers were expelled from house and home—from hearth and altar—from church and parish, to make room for belly-gods and thieves? Who, when a devoted few of the Lord's people were united to lift the fallen standard, and once more advance the good cause, was the readiest to break their purpose—to search for, persecute, and apprehend them? Whose breath did I feel warm on my neck—whose naked sword was thrust within a foot of my body, whilst I lurked darkling, like a thief in concealment, in the house of my fathers?—It was Geoffrey Peveril's—it was your father's!—What can you answer to all this, or how can you reconcile it with your present wishes?"

Julian, in reply, could only remark, "That these injuries had been of long standing—that they had been done in heat of times, and heat of temper, and that Master Bridgenorth, in christian kindness, should not entertain a keen resentment of them, when a door was opened for a reconciliation."

"Peace, young man," said Bridgenorth, "thou speakest of thou knowest not what. To forgive our human wrongs is christian-like and commendable; but we have no commission to forgive those which have been done to the cause of religion and of liberty; we have no right to grant immunity, or to shake hands with those who have poured forth the blood of our brethren." He looked at the picture of Christian, and was silent for a few minutes, as if he feared to give too violent way to his own impetuosity, and resumed the discourse in a milder tone.

"These things I point out to you, Julian, that I may shew you how impossible, in the eyes of a merely worldly man, would be the union which you are desirous of. But Heaven hath at times opened a door, where man beholds no means of issue. Julian, your mother, for one to whom the truth is unknown, is, after the fashion of the world, one of the best, and one of the wisest of women; and Providence, which gave her so fair a form, and tenanted that form with a mind as pure as the original frailty of our vile nature will permit, means not, I trust, that she shall continue to the

end to be a vessel of wrath and perdition. Of your father I say nothing—he is what the times and example of others, and the counsels of his lordly priest, have made him; and of him, once more, I say nothing, save that I have power over him, which ere now he might have felt, but that there is one within his chambers, who might have suffered in his suffering. Nor do I wish to root up your ancient family. If I prize not your boast of family honours and pedigree, I would not willingly destroy them; more than I would pull down a moss-grown tower, or hew to the ground an ancient oak, save for the straighting of the common path, and the advantaging of the public. I have, therefore, no resentment against the humbled House of Peveril—nay, I have regard to it in its depression."

He here made a second pause, as if he expected Julian to say something. But notwithstanding the ardour with which the young man had pressed his suit, he was too much trained in ideas of the importance of his family, and in the better habit of respect for his parents, to hear,

without displeasure, some part of Bridgenorth's discourse.

"The house of Peveril," he replied, "was never humbled."

"Had you said the sons of that house had never been *humble*," answered Bridgenorth, "you would have come nearer the truth.—*Are* you not humbled? Live you not here, the lackey of a haughty woman, the play-companion of an empty youth? If you leave this Isle, and go to the court of England, see what regard will there be paid to the old pedigree that deduces your descent from kings and conquerors. A scurril or obscene jest, an impudent carriage, a laced cloak, a handful of gold, and the readiness to wager it on a card, or a die, will better advance you at the court of Charles, than your father's ancient name, and slavish devotion of blood and fortune to the cause of *his* father."

"That is, indeed, but too probable," said Peveril; "but the court shall be no element of mine. I will live like my fathers, among my own people, care for their comforts, decide their differences——"

"Build May-poles, and dance around them," said Bridgenorth, with another of those grim smiles, which passed over his features like the light of a sexton's torch, as it glares and is reflected by the window of the church, when he comes from locking a funeral vault. "No, Julian, these are not times in which, by the dreaming drudgery of a country magistrate, and the petty cares of a country proprietor, a man can serve his unhappy country. There are mighty designs afloat, and men are called to make their choice betwixt God and Baal. The ancient superstition—the abomination of our fathers—is raising its head, and flinging abroad its snares, under the protection of the princes of the earth; but she raises not her head unmarked or unwatched; the true English hearts are as thousands, which wait but a signal to arise as one man, and shew the kings of the earth that they have combined in vain! We will cast their cords from us—the cup of their abominations we will not taste."

"You speak in darkness, Master Bridge-

north," said Peveril. "Knowing so much of me, you may, perhaps, also be aware, that I at least have seen too much of the delusions of Rome, to desire that they should be propagated at home."

"Else, wherefore do I speak to thee friendly and so free?" said Bridgenorth. "Do I not know, with what readiness of early wit you baffled the wily attempts of the woman's priest, to seduce thee from the Protestant faith? Do I not know, how thou wast beset when abroad, and that thou didst both hold thine own faith, and secure the wavering belief of thy friend? Said I not, this was done like the son of Margaret Peveril? Said I not, he holdeth, as yet, but the dead letter—but the seed which is sown shall one day sprout and quicken?—Enough, however, of this. For to-day this is thy habitation. I will see in thee neither the servant of that daughter of Ethbaal, nor the son of him who pursued my life, and blemished my honours; but thou shalt be to me, for this day, as the child of her without whom my house had been extinct."

So saying, he stretched out his thin, bony

hand, and grasped that of Julian Peveril; but there was such a look of mourning in his welcome, that whatever delight the youth anticipated, spending so long a time in the neighbourhood of Alice Bridgenorth, perhaps in her society, or however strongly he felt the prudence of conciliating her father's good will, he could not help feeling as if his heart was chilled in his company.

CHAPTER II.

> This day at least is friendship's—on the morrow
> Let strife come an she will.
>
> OTWAY.

DEBORAH DEBBITCH, summoned by her master, now made her appearance, with her handkerchief at her eyes, and an appearance of great mental trouble. "It was not my fault, Major Bridgenorth," she said; "how could I help it? like will to like—the boy would come—the girl would see him."

"Peace, foolish woman," said Bridgenorth, "and hear what I have got to say."

"I know what your honour has to say well enough," said Deborah. "Service, I wot, is no inheritance now-a-days—some are wiser than other some—if I had not been wheedled away

from Martindale, I might have had a house of mine own by this time."

"Peace, idiot!" said Bridgenorth; but so intent was Deborah on her vindication, that he could but thrust the interjection, as it were edgeways, between her exclamations, which followed as thick as is usual in cases, where folks endeavour to avert deserved censure by a clamorous justification ere the charge be brought.

"No wonder she was cheated," she said, "out of sight of her own interest, when it was to wait on pretty Miss Alice. All your honour's gold should never have tempted me, but that I knew she was but a dead cast-away, poor innocent, if she were taken away from my lady or me.—And so this is the end on't!—up early, and down late—and this is all my thanks!—but your honour had better take care what you do—she has the short cough yet sometimes—and should take physic, spring and fall."

"Peace, chattering fool!" said her master, so soon as her failing breath gave him an opportunity to strike in, "thinkest thou I knew not of

this young gentleman's visits to the Black-Fort, and that if they had displeased me, I would not have known how to stop them?"

"Did I know that your honour knew of his visits!" exclaimed Deborah, in a triumphant tone,—for, like most of her condition, she never sought farther for her defence than a lie, however inconsistent and improbable—"*Did* I know that your honour knew of it?—Why, how should I have permitted his visits else? I wonder what your honour takes me for! Had I not been sure it was the thing in this world that your honour most desired, would I have presumed to lend it a hand forward? I trust I know my duty better. Hear if I ever asked another youngster into the house, save himself—for I knew your honour was wise, and quarrels cannot last for ever, and love begins where hatred ends; and, to be sure, they look as if they were born one for the other —and then, the estates of Moultrassie and Martindale suit each other like sheath and knife."

"Parrot of a woman, hold your tongue!" said Bridgenorth, his patience almost completely ex-

hausted; "or if you will prate, let it be to your play-fellows in the kitchen, and bid them get us some dinner presently, for Master Peveril is far from home."

"That I will, and with all my heart," said Deborah; "and if there are a pair of fatter fowls in Man than shall clap their wings on the table presently, your honour shall call me goose as well as parrot." She then left the apartment.

"It is to such a woman as that," said Bridgenorth, looking after her significantly, "that you conceived me to have abandoned the charge of my only child? But enough of this subject—we will walk abroad, if you will, while she is engaged in a province fitter for her understanding."

So saying, he left the house, accompanied by Julian Peveril, and they were soon walking side by side, as if they had been old acquaintances.

It may have happened to many of our readers, as it has done to ourselves, to be thrown by accident into society with some individual whose claims to what is called a *serious* character stand considerably higher than our own, and with

whom, therefore, we have conceived ourselves likely to spend our time in a very stiff and constrained manner; while, on the other hand, our destined companion may have apprehended some disgust from the supposed levity and thoughtless gaiety of a disposition so different from his own. Now it has frequently happened, that when we, with that urbanity and good humour which is our principal characteristic, have accommodated ourself to our companion, by throwing as much seriousness into our conversation as our habits will admit, he, on the other hand, moved by our liberal example, hath divested his manners of a part of their austerity; and our conversation has, in consequence, been of that pleasant texture, betwixt the useful and agreeable, which best resembles "the fairy-web of night and day," usually called in prose the twilight. It is probable both parties may, on such occasions, have been the better for their encounter, even if it went no farther than to establish for the time a community of feeling between men, who, separated more perhaps by temper than by principle, are too apt to

charge each other with profane frivolity on the one hand, or fanaticism on the other.

It fared thus in Peveril's walk with Bridgenorth, and in the conversation which he held with him.

Carefully avoiding the subject on which he had already spoken, Master Bridgenorth turned his conversation chiefly on foreign travel, and on the wonders he had seen in distant countries, and which he appeared to have marked with a curious and observant eye. This discourse made the time fly light away ; for although the anecdotes and observations thus communicated, were all tinged with the serious and almost gloomy spirit of the narrator, they yet contained traits of interest and of wonder, such as are usually interesting to a youthful ear, and were particularly so to Julian, who had, in his disposition, some cast of the romantic and adventurous.

It appeared that Bridgenorth knew the south of France, and could tell many stories of the French Huguenots, who already began to sustain those vexations which a few years afterwards

were summed up by the revocation of the Edict of Nantz. He had even been in Hungary, for he spoke as from personal knowledge of the character of several of the heads of the great Protestant insurrection, which at this time had taken place under the celebrated Tekeli; and laid down solid reasons why they were entitled to make common cause with the Great Turk, rather than submit to the Pope of Rome. He talked also of Savoy, where those of the reformed religion still suffered a cruel persecution; and he mentioned, with a swelling spirit, the protection which Oliver had afforded to the oppressed Protestant churches; "therein shewing himself," he added, "more fit to wield the supreme power, than those who, claiming it by right of inheritance, use it only for their own vain and voluptuous pursuits."

"I did not expect," said Peveril, modestly, "to have heard Oliver's panegyric from you, Master Bridgenorth."

"I do not panegyrise him," answered Bridgenorth; "I speak but truth of that extraordinary man, now being dead, whom, when alive, I fear-

ed not to withstand to his face. It is the fault of the present unhappy King, if he make us look back with regret to the days when the nation was respected abroad, and when devotion and sobriety were practised at home.—But I mean not to vex your spirit by controversy. You have lived amongst those who find it more easy and more pleasant to be the pensioners of France than her controllers—to spend the money which she doles out to themselves, than to check the tyranny with which she oppresses our poor brethren of the religion. When the scales shall fall from thine eyes, all this thou shalt see; and seeing, shalt learn to detest and despise it."

By this time they had completed their walk, and were returned to Black-Fort by a different path from that which had led them up the valley. The exercise and the general tone of conversation had removed, in some degree, the shyness and embarrassment which Peveril originally felt in Bridgenorth's presence, and which the tenor of his first remarks had rather increased than diminished. Deborah's promised banquet was soon on the board; and in simplicity, as

well as neatness and good order, answered the character she had claimed for it. In one respect alone, there seemed some inconsistency, perhaps a little affectation. Most of the dishes were of silver, and the plates were of the same metal; instead of the trenchers and pewter which Peveril had usually seen employed on similar occasions at Black-Fort.

Presently, with the feeling of one who walks in a pleasant dream from which he fears to waken, and whose delight is mingled with wonder and with uncertainty, Julian Peveril found himself seated between Alice Bridgenorth and her father—the being he most loved on earth, and the person whom he had ever considered as the great obstacle to their intercourse. The confusion of his mind was such, that he could scarce reply to the importunate civilities of Dame Deborah; who, seated with them at table in her quality of gouvernante, now dispensed the good things which had been prepared under her own eye.

As for Alice, she seemed to have formed a resolution to play the mute; for she answered not,

excepting briefly, to the questions of Dame Debbitch; nay, even when her father, which happened once or twice, attempted to bring her forward in the conversation, she made no further reply than respect for him rendered absolutely necessary.

Upon Bridgenorth himself, then, devolved the task of entertaining the company; and, contrary to his ordinary habits, he did not seem to shrink from it. His discourse was not only easy, but almost cheerful, though ever and anon crossed by some expressions indicative of natural and habitual melancholy, or prophetic of future misfortune and woe. Flashes of enthusiasm, too, shot along his conversation, gleaming like the sheet-lightning of an autumn eve, which throws a strong, though momentary illumination across the sober twilight, and all the surrounding objects, which, touched by it, assume a wilder and more striking character. In general, however, Bridgenorth's remarks were plain and sensible; and as he aimed at no graces of language, any ornament which they received arose out of the interest with which they were impressed on his

hearers. For example, when Deborah, in the pride and vulgarity of her heart, called Julian's attention to the plate from which they had been eating, Bridgenorth seemed to think an apology necessary for such superfluous expence.

"It was a symptom," he said, "of approaching danger, when men, who were not usually influenced by the vanities of life, employed much money in ornaments composed of the precious metals. It was a sign that the merchant could not obtain a profit for the capital, which, for the sake of security, he invested in this inert form. It was a proof that the noblemen or gentlemen feared the rapacity of power, when they put their wealth into forms the most portable and the most capable of being hidden; and it shewed the uncertainty of credit, when a man of judgment preferred the actual possession of a mass of silver to the convenience of a goldsmith's or a banker's receipt. While a shadow of liberty remained," he said, "domestic rights were last invaded; and, therefore, men disposed upon their cupboards and tables the wealth which in these places would remain longest, though not perhaps,

finally, sacred from the grasp of a tyrannical government. But let there be a demand for capital to support a profitable commerce, and the mass is at once consigned to the furnace, and, ceasing to be a vain and cumbrous ornament of the banquet, becomes a potent and active agent for furthering the prosperity of the country."

"In war, too," said Peveril, "plate has been found a ready resource."

"But too much so," answered Bridgenorth. "In the late times, the plate of the nobles and gentry, with that of the colleges and the sale of the crown-jewels, enabled the King to make his unhappy stand, which prevented matters returning to a state of peace and good order, until the sword had attained an undue superiority both over King and Parliament."

He looked at Julian as he spoke, much as he who proves a horse offers some object suddenly to his eyes, then watches to see if he starts or blenches from it. But Julian's thoughts were too much bent on other topics to manifest any alarm. His answer referred to a previous part of Bridgenorth's discourse, and was not returned

till after a brief pause. "War, then," he said, "war, the grand impoverisher, is also a creator of the wealth which it wastes and devours."

"Yes," replied Bridgenorth, "even as the sluice brings into action the sleeping waters of the lake, which it finally drains. Necessity invents arts and discovers means; and what necessity is sterner than that of civil war? Therefore, even war is not in itself unmixed evil, being the creator of impulses and energies which could not otherwise have existed in society."

"Men should go to war, then," said Peveril, "that they may send their silver-plate to the mint, and eat from pewter dishes and wooden platters?"

"Not so, my son," said Bridgenorth. Then checking himself as he observed the deep crimson in Julian's cheek and brow, he added, "I crave your pardon for such familiarity; but I meant not to limit what I said even now to such trifling consequences, although it may be something salutary to tear men from their pomps and luxuries, and teach those to be Romans who would otherwise be Sybarites. But I would say, that

times of public danger, as they call into circulation the miser's horde and the proud man's bullion, and so add to the circulating wealth of the country, do also call into action many a brave and noble spirit, which would otherwise lie torpid, give no example to the living, and bequeath no name to future ages. Society knows not, and cannot know, the mental treasures which slumber in her bosom, till necessity and opportunity call forth the statesman and the soldier from the shades of lowly life to the parts they are designed by Providence to perform, and the stations which nature had qualified them to hold. So rose Oliver—so rose Milton—so rose many another name which cannot be forgotten—even as the tempest summons forth and displays the address of the mariner."

"You speak," said Peveril, "as if national calamity might be, in some sort, an advantage."

"And if it were not so," replied Bridgenorth, "it had not existed in this state of trial, where all temporal evil is alleviated by something good in its progress or result, and where all that is good is close coupled with that which is in itself evil."

"It must be a noble sight," said Julian, "to behold the slumbering energies of a great mind awakened into energy, and to see it assume the authority which is its due over spirits more meanly endowed."

"I once witnessed," said Bridgenorth, "something to the same effect; and as the tale is brief, I will tell it you, if you will:—

"Amongst my wanderings, the Transatlantic settlements have not escaped me; more especially the country of New England, into which our native land has shaken from her lap, as a drunkard flings from him his treasures, so much that is precious in the eyes of God and of his children. There thousands of our best and most godly men—such whose righteousness might come between the Almighty and his wrath, and prevent the ruin of cities—are content to be the inhabitants of the desert, rather encountering the unenlightened savages, than stooping to extinguish, under the oppression practised in Britain, the light that is within their own minds. There I remained for a time, during the wars which the colony maintained with Philip, a great Indian Chief, or Sa-

chem, as they were called, who seemed a messenger sent from Satan to buffet them. His cruelty was great—his dissimulation profound; and the skill and promptitude with which he maintained a destructive and desultory warfare, inflicted many dreadful calamities on the settlement. I was, by chance, at a small village in the woods, more than thirty miles from Boston, and in its situation exceedingly lonely, and surrounded with thickets. Nevertheless, there was no idea of any danger from the Indians at that time, for men trusted to the protection of a considerable body of troops who had taken the field for protection of the frontiers, and who lay, or were supposed to lie, betwixt the hamlet and the enemy's country. But they had to do with a foe, whom the devil himself had inspired at once with cunning and cruelty. It was on a Sabbath morning, when we had assembled to take sweet counsel together in the Lord's house. Our temple was but constructed of wooden logs; but when shall the chaunt of trained hirelings, or the sounding of tin and brass tubes amid the aisles of a minster, arise so sweet-

ly to heaven, as did the psalm in which we united at once our hearts and our voices! An excellent worthy, who now sleeps in the Lord, Nehemiah Solsgrace, long the companion of my pilgrimage, had just begun to wrestle in prayer, when a woman, with disordered looks and dishevelled hair, entered our chapel in a distracted manner, screaming incessantly, 'The Indians! The Indians!'—In that land no man dares separate himself from his defences; and whether in the city or in the field, in the ploughed land or the forest, men keep beside them their weapons, as did the Jews at the rebuilding of the Temple. So we sallied forth with our guns and pikes, and heard the whoop of these incarnate devils, already in possession of a part of the town, and exercising their cruelty on the few whom weighty causes or indisposition had withheld from public worship; and it was remarked as a judgment, that, upon that bloody Sabbath, Adrian Hanson, a Dutchman, a man well enough towards man, but whose mind was altogether given to worldly gain, was shot and scalped as he was summing his weakly gains in his warehouse. In fine,

there was much damage done, and although our arrival and entrance into combat did in some sort put them back, yet being surprised and confused, and having no appointed leader of our band, the devilish enemy shot hard at us, and had some advantage. It was pitiful to hear the screams of women and children amid the report of guns and the whistling of bullets, mixed with the ferocious yells of these savages, which they term their war-whoop. Several houses in the upper part of the village were soon on fire; and the roaring of the flames, and crackling of the great beams as they blazed, added to the horrible confusion; while the smoke which the wind drove against us gave further advantage to the enemy, who fought, as it were, invisible, and under cover, whilst we fell fast by their unerring fire. In this state of confusion, and while we were about to adopt the desperate project of evacuating the village, and, placing the women and children in the centre, of attempting a retreat to the nearest settlement, it pleased Heaven to send us unexpected assistance. A tall man, of

a reverend appearance, whom no one of us had ever seen before, suddenly was in the midst of us, as we hastily agitated the resolution of retreating. His garments were of the skin of the elk, and he wore sword, and carried gun; I never saw any thing more august than his features, overshadowed by locks of grey hair, which mingled with a long beard of the same colour. 'Men and brethren,' he said, in a voice like that which turns back the flight, 'why sink your hearts? and why are you thus disquieted? Fear ye that the God we serve will give you up to yonder heathen dogs? Follow me, and you shall see this day that there is a captain in Israel!' He uttered a few brief but distinct orders, in the tone of one who was accustomed to command; and such was the influence of his appearance, his mien, his language, and his presence of mind, that he was implicitly obeyed by men who had never seen him until that moment. We were hastily divided, at his order, into two bodies; one of which maintained the defence of the village with more courage than ever, convinced

that the Unknown was sent by God to our rescue. At his command they assumed the best and most sheltered positions for exchanging their deadly fire with the Indians; while, under cover of the smoke, the stranger sallied from the town, at the head of the other division of the New-England men, and, fetching a circuit, attacked the Red Warriors in the rear. The surprise, as is usual amongst savages, had complete effect; for they doubted not that they were assailed in their turn, and placed betwixt two hostile parties by the return of a detachment from the provincial army. The heathens fled in confusion, abandoning the half-won village, and leaving behind them such a number of their warriors, that the tribe hath never recovered their loss. Never shall I forget the figure of our venerable leader, when our men, and not they only, but the women and children of the village, rescued from the tomahawk and scalping-knife, stood crowded around him, yet scarce venturing to approach his person, and more minded, perhaps, to worship him as a descended angel, than to thank him as a fellow-mortal. 'Not

unto me be the glory,' he said; 'I am but an implement, frail as yourselves, in the hand of Him who is strong to deliver. Bring me a cup of water, that I may allay my parched throat, ere I assay the task of offering thanks where they are most due.' I was nearest to him as he spoke, and I gave into his hand the water he requested. At that moment we exchanged glances, and it seemed to me that I recognized a noble friend whom I had long since deemed in glory; but he gave me no time to speak, had speech been prudent. Sinking on his knees, and signing us to obey him, he poured forth a strong and energetic thanksgiving for the turning back of the battle, which, pronounced with a voice loud and clear as a war-trumpet, thrilled through the joints and marrow of the hearers. I have heard many an act of devotion in my life, had Heaven vouchsafed me grace to profit by them; but such a prayer as this, uttered amid the dead and the dying, with a rich tone of mingled triumph and adoration, was beyond them all—it was like the song of the inspired prophetess who dwelt beneath the palm-

tree between Ramah and Bethel. He was silent; and for a brief space we remained with our faces bent to the earth—no man daring to lift his head. At length we looked up, but our deliverer was no longer amongst us; nor was he ever again seen in the land which he had rescued."

Here Bridgenorth, who had told this singular story with an eloquence and vivacity of detail very contrary to the usual dryness of his conversation, paused for an instant, and then resumed:—"Thou seest, young man, that men of valour and of discretion are called forth to command in circumstances of national exigence, though their very existence is unknown in the land which they are predestined to deliver."

"But what thought the people of the mysterious stranger?" said Julian, who had listened with eagerness, for the story was of a kind interesting to the youthful and the brave.

"Many things," answered Bridgenorth, "and, as usual, little to the purpose. The prevailing opinion was, notwithstanding his own disclamation, that the stranger was really a supernatural being; others believed him an inspired cham-

pion, transported in the body from some distant climate, to shew us the way to safety; others, again, concluded that he was a recluse, who, either from motives of piety, or other cogent reasons, had become a dweller in the wilderness, and shunned the face of man."

"And, if I may presume to ask," said Julian, "to which of these opinions were you disposed to adhere?"

"The last suited best with the transient though close view with which I had perused the stranger's features," replied Bridgenorth; "for although I dispute not that it may please Heaven, on high occasions, even to raise one from the dead in defence of his country, yet I doubted not then, as I doubt not now, that I looked on the living form of one, who had indeed powerful reasons to conceal him in the cleft of the rock."

"Are these reasons a secret?" asked Julian Peveril.

"Not properly a secret," replied Bridgenorth; "for I fear not thy betraying what I might tell thee in private discourse; and besides, wert thou so base, the prey lies too distant for any hunters

to whom thou couldst point out its traces. But the name of this worthy will sound harsh in thy ear, on account of one action of his life—being his accession to a great measure, which made the extreme isles of the earth to tremble. Have you never heard of Richard Whalley?"

"Of the regicide?" exclaimed Peveril, starting.

"Call his act what thou wilt," said Bridgenorth; "he was not less the rescuer of that devoted village, that, with other leading spirits of the age, he sat in the judgment seat when Charles Stuart was arraigned at the bar, and subscribed the sentence that went forth upon him."

"I have ever heard," said Julian, in an altered voice, and colouring deeply, "that you, Master Bridgenorth, with other Presbyterians, were totally averse to that detestable crime, and were ready to have made joint cause with the Cavaliers in preventing so horrible a parricide."

"If it were so," replied Bridgenorth, "we have been richly rewarded by his predecessor."

"Rewarded!" exclaimed Julian; "Does the distinction of good and evil, and our obligation to do the one and forbear the other, depend on the reward which may attach to our actions?"

"God forbid," answered Bridgenorth; "yet those who view the havoc which this House of Stuart have made in the Church and State—the tyranny which they exercise over men's persons and consciences—may well doubt whether it be lawful to use weapons in their defence. Yet you hear me not praise, or even vindicate the death of the King, though so far deserved, as he was false to his oath as a Prince and magistrate. I only tell you what you desired to know, that Richard Whalley, one of the late King's judges, was he of whom I have just been speaking. I knew his lofty brow, though time had made it balder and higher; his grey eye retained all its lustre; and though the grizzled beard covered the lower part of his face, it prevented me not from recognizing him. The scent was hot after him for his blood; but by the assistance of those friends whom Heaven had raised

up for his preservation, he was concealed carefully, and emerged only to do the will of Providence, in the matter of that battle. Perhaps his voice may be heard in the field once more, should England need one of her noblest hearts."

"Now God forbid!" said Julian.

"Amen," returned Bridgenorth. "May God avert civil war, and pardon those whose madness would bring it on us."

There was a long pause, during which Julian, who had scarce lifted his eyes towards Alice, stole a glance in that direction, and was struck by the deep cast of melancholy which had stolen over features, to which a cheerful, if not a gay expression, was most natural. So soon as she caught his eye, she remarked, and, as Julian thought, with significance, that the shadows were lengthening, and evening coming on.

He heard; and although satisfied that she hinted at his departure, he could not, upon the instant, find resolution to break the spell which detained him. The language which Bridgenorth held was not only new and alarming, but so contrary to the maxims in which he was brought

up, that, as a son of Sir Geoffrey Peveril of the Peak, he would, in another case, have thought himself called upon to dispute its conclusions, even at the sword's point. But Bridgenorth's opinions were delivered with so much calmness—seemed so much the result of conviction—that they excited in Julian rather a spirit of wonder, than of angry controversy. There was a character of sober decision, and sedate melancholy, in all that he said; which, even had he not been the father of Alice, (and perhaps Julian was not himself aware how much he was influenced by that circumstance,) would have rendered it difficult to take personal offence. His language and sentiments were of that quiet, yet decided kind, upon which it is difficult either to fix controversy, or quarrel, although it be impossible to acquiesce in the conclusions to which they lead.

While Julian remained, as if spell-bound to his chair, scarce more surprised at the company in which he found himself, than at the opinions to which he was listening, another circumstance reminded him that the proper time of his stay at Black-Fort had been expended. Little Fairy

the Manx poney, which, well accustomed to the vicinity of Black-Fort, used to feed near the house while his master made his visits there, began to find his present stay rather too long. She had been the gift of the Countess to Julian, whilst a youth, and came of a high-spirited mountain breed, remarkable alike for hardiness, for longevity, and for a degree of sagacity approaching to that of the dog. Fairy shewed the latter quality, by the way in which she chose to express her impatience to be moving homewards. At least such seemed the purpose of the shrill neigh with which she startled the female inmates of the parlour, who, the moment afterwards, could not forbear smiling to see the nose of the poney advanced through the opened casement.

"Fairy reminds me," said Julian, looking to Alice, and rising, "that the term of my stay here is exhausted."

"Speak with me yet one moment," said Bridgenorth, withdrawing him into a Gothic recess of the old-fashioned apartment, and speaking so low that he could not be overheard by Alice and her gouvernante, who, in the mean-

time, caressed, and fed with fragments of bread, the intruder Fairy.

"You have not, after all," said Bridgenorth, "told me the cause of your coming hither." He stopped, as if to enjoy his embarrassment, and then added, "And indeed it were most unnecessary that you should do so. I have not so far forgotten the days of my youth, or those affections which bind poor frail humanity but too much to the things of this world. Will you find no words to ask of me the great boon which you seek, and which, peradventure, you would not have hesitated to make your own, without my knowledge, and against my consent?—Nay, never vindicate thyself, but mark me farther. The patriarch bought his beloved by fourteen years' hard service to her father Laban, and they seemed to him but as a few days. But he that would wed my daughter, must serve, in comparison, but a few days; though in matters of such mighty import, that they shall seem as the service of many years.—Reply not to me now, but go, and peace be with you."

He retired so quickly, after speaking, that Pe-

veril had literally not an instant to reply. He cast his eyes around the apartment, but Deborah and her charge had also disappeared. His gaze rested for a moment on the portrait of Christian, and his imagination suggested, that his dark features were illuminated by a smile of haughty triumph. He started, and looked more attentively—it was but the effect of the evening beam, which touched the picture at the instant. The effect was gone, and there remained but the fixed, grave, inflexible features of the republican soldier.

Julian left the apartment as one who walks in a dream; he mounted Fairy, and, agitated by a variety of thoughts, which he was unable to reduce to order, he returned to Castle-Rushin before the night sat down.

Here he found all in movement. The Countess, with her son, had, upon some news received, or resolution formed, during his absence, removed, with a principal part of their family, to the yet stronger Castle of Holm-Peel, about eight miles distance across the island; and which had been suffered to fall into a much more dilapida-

ted condition than that of Castletown; so far as it could be considered as a place of residence. But as a fortress, Holm-Peel was stronger than Castle-town; nay, unless assailed regularly, was almost impregnable; and was always held by a garrison belonging to the Lords of Man. Here Peveril arrived at night-fall. He was told in the fishing village, that the night-bell of the Castle had been rung earlier than usual, and the watch set with circumstances of unusual and jealous precaution.

Resolving, therefore, not to disturb the garrison by entering at that late hour, he obtained an indifferent lodging in the town for the night, and determined to go to the Castle early on the succeeding morning. He was not sorry thus to gain a few hours of solitude, to think over the agitating events of the preceding day.

CHAPTER III.

> ——— What seem'd it's head,
> The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
>
> *Paradise Lost.*

SODOR, or Holm-Peel, so is named the castle to which our Julian directed his course early on the preceding morning, is one of those singular monuments of antiquity with which this singular and interesting island abounds. It occupies the whole of a high rocky peninsula, or rather an island, for it is surrounded by the sea at high water, and scarcely accessible even when the tide is out, although a stone causeway, of great solidity, erected for the express purpose, connects the island with the main-land. The whole space is surrounded by double walls of great strength and thickness; and the access to the interior, at the time which we treat of, was only by two flights

of steep and narrow steps, divided from each other by a strong tower and guard-house; under the former of which, there is an entrance arch. The open space within the walls extends to two acres, and contains many objects worthy of antiquarian curiosity. There were, besides the castle itself, two cathedral churches, dedicated, the earlier to Saint Patrick, the later to Saint Germain; besides two smaller churches; all of which had become, even in that day, more or less ruinous. Their decayed walls, exhibiting the rude and massive architecture of the most remote period, were composed of a ragged grey stone, which formed a singular contrast with the bright red freestone of which the window-cases, corner-stones, arches, and other ornamental parts of the building were composed.

Besides these four ruinous churches, the space of ground inclosed by the massive exterior walls of Holm-Peel exhibited many other vestiges of the olden time. There was a square mound of earth, facing, with its angles to the points of the compass, one of those motes, as they were called, on which, in ancient times, the northern tribes elect-

ed or recognized their chiefs, and held their solemn popular assemblies, or *comitia*. There was also one of those singular towers, so common in Ireland as to have proved the favourite theme of her antiquaries; but of which the real use and meaning seems yet to be hidden in the mist of ages. This of Holm-Peel had been converted to the purpose of a watch-tower. There were, besides, Runic monuments, of which the legends could not be decyphered; and later inscriptions to the memory of champions, of whom the names only were preserved from oblivion. But tradition and superstitious eld, still most busy where real history is silent, had filled up the long blank of accurate information with tales of Sea-kings and Pirates, Hebridean Chiefs and Norwegian Resolutes, who had formerly warred against, and in defence of, this famous castle. Superstition, too, had her tales of fairies, ghosts, and spectres—her legends of saints and demons, of fairies and of familiar spirits, which in no corner of the British empire are told and received with more absolute credulity than in the Isle of Man.

Amidst all these ruins of an older time arose the Castle itself,—now ruinous—but in Charles II.'s reign well garrisoned, and, in a military point of view, kept in complete order. It was a venerable and very ancient building, containing several apartments of sufficient size and height to be termed noble. But in the surrender of the island by Christian, the furniture had been, in a great measure, plundered or destroyed by the republican soldiers; so that, as we have before hinted, its present state was ill adapted for the residence of the noble proprietor. Yet it had been often the abode, not only of the Lords of Man, but of those state prisoners whom the Kings of Britain sometimes committed to their charge.

In this Castle of Holm-Peel the great king-maker, Richard, Earl of Warwick, was confined, during one period of his eventful life, to ruminate at leisure on his farther schemes of ambition. And here, too, Eleanor, the haughty wife of the good Duke of Gloucester, pined out in seclusion the last days of her banishment. The sentinels pretended that her discontented spectre was often

visible at night, traversing the battlements of the external walls, or standing motionless beside a particular solitary turret of one of the watch-towers with which they are flanked; but dissolving into air at cock-crow, or when the bell tolled from the yet remaining tower of Saint Germain's church.

Such was Holm-Peel, as records inform us, till towards the end of the seventeenth century.

It was in one of the lofty but almost unfurnished apartments of this ancient castle that Julian Peveril found his friend the Earl of Derby, who had that moment sate down to a breakfast composed of various sorts of fish. "Welcome, most imperial Julian," he said; "welcome to our royal fortress; in which, as yet, we are not like to be starved with hunger, though well nigh dead for cold."

Julian answered by inquiring the meaning of this sudden movement.

"Upon my word," replied the Earl, "you know nearly as much of it as I do. My mother has told me nothing about it; supposing, I be-

lieve, that I will at length be tempted to inquire; but she will find herself much mistaken. I shall give her credit for full wisdom in her proceedings, rather than put her to the trouble to render a reason, though no woman can render one better."

"Come, come; this is affectation, my good friend," said Julian. "You should inquire into these matters a little more curiously."

"To what purpose?" said the Earl. "To hear old stories about the Tynwald laws, and the contending rights of the lords and the clergy, and all the rest of that Celtic barbarism, which, like Burgesse's thorough-paced doctrine, enters at one ear, paces through, and goes out at the other?"

"Come, my lord," said Julian, "you are not so indifferent as you would represent yourself—you are dying of curiosity to know what this hurry is about; only you think it the courtly humour to appear careless about your own affairs."

"Why, what should it be about," said the young Earl, "unless some factious dispute between our Majesty's minister, Governor Nowel, and our vassals? or perhaps some dispute betwixt our Ma-

jesty and the ecclesiastical jurisdictions? for all which, our Majesty cares as little as any king in Christendom."

"I rather suppose there is intelligence from England," said Julian. "I heard last night in Peel-town, that Greenhalgh is come over with unpleasant news."

"He brought me nothing that was pleasant, I wot well," said the Earl. "I expected something from St Evremond or Hamilton—some new plays by Dryden or Lee; and some waggery or lampoons from the Rose Coffee-house; and the fellow has brought me nothing but a parcel of tracts about Protestants and Papists, and a folio play-book, one of the conceptions, as she calls them, of that old mad-woman the Duchess of Newcastle."

"Hush, my lord, for Heaven's sake," said Peveril; "here comes the Countess; and you know she takes fire at the least slight to her ancient friend."

"Let her read her ancient friend's works herself then," said the Earl, "and think her as wise as she can; but I would not give one of Waller's

songs, or Denman's satires, for a whole cart-load of her Grace's trash.—But here comes our mother, with care on her brow."

The Countess of Derby entered the apartment accordingly, holding in her hand a number of papers. Her dress was a mourning habit, with a deep train of black velvet, which was borne by a little favourite attendant, a deaf and dumb girl, whom, in compassion to her misfortune, the Countess had educated about her person for some years. Upon this unfortunate, with the touch of romance which marked many of her proceedings, Lady Derby had conferred the name of Fenella, after some ancient princess of the island. The Countess herself was not much changed since we last presented her to our readers. Age had rendered her step more slow, but not less majestic; and while it traced some wrinkles on her brow, had failed to quench the sedate fire of her dark eye. The young men rose to receive her with the formal reverence which they knew she loved, and were greeted by her with equal kindness.

"Cousin Peveril," she said, (for so she always

called Julian, in respect of his mother being a kinswoman of her husband,) "you were ill abroad last night, when we much needed your counsel."

Julian answered with a blush which he could not prevent, "That he had followed his sport among the mountains too far—had returned late—and finding her ladyship was removed from Castletown, had instantly followed the family hither; but as the night-bell was rung, and the watch set, he had deemed it more respectful to lodge for the night in the town."

"It is well," said the Countess; "and to do you justice, Julian, you are seldom a truant neglecter of appointed hours, though, like the rest of the youth of this age, you sometimes suffer your sports to consume too much of time that should be spent otherwise. But for your friend Philip, he is an avowed contemner of good order, and seems to find pleasure in wasting time, even when he does not enjoy it."

"I have been enjoying my time just now at least," said the Earl, rising from table, and picking his teeth carelessly. "These fresh mullets are delicious, and so is the Lachrymæ Christi.

I pray you to sit down to breakfast, Julian, and partake the goods my royal foresight has provided. Never was King of Man nearer being left to the mercy of the execrable brandy of his dominions. Old Griffiths would never, in the midst of our speedy retreat of last night, have had sense enough to secure a few flasks, had I not given him a hint on that important subject. But presence of mind amid danger and tumult, is a jewel I have always possessed."

"I wish, then, Philip, you would exert it to better purpose," said the Countess, half smiling, half displeased; for she doated upon her son with all a mother's fondness, even when she was most angry with him for being deficient in the peculiar and chivalrous disposition which had distinguished his father, and which was so analogous to her own romantic and high-minded character. "Lend me your signet," she added with a sigh; "for it were, I fear, vain to ask you to read over these dispatches from England, and execute the warrants which I have thought necessary to prepare in consequence."

"My signet you shall command with all my heart, madam," said Earl Philip; "but spare me the revision of what you are much more capable to decide upon. I am, you know, a most complete *Roi faineant*, and never once interfered with my *Maire de palais* in her proceedings."

The Countess made signs to her little train-bearer, who immediately went to seek wax and a light, with which she presently returned.

In the meanwhile, the Countess continued, addressing Peveril. "Philip does himself less than justice. When you were absent, Julian, (for if you had been here I would have given you the credit of prompting your friend,) he had a spirited controversy with the Bishop, for an attempt to enforce spiritual censures against a poor wretch, by confining her in the vault under the chapel."

"Do not think better of me than I deserve," said the Earl to Peveril; "my mother has omitted to tell you the culprit was pretty Peggy of Ramsay, and her crime what in Cupid's courts would have been called a peccadillo."

"Do not you make yourself worse than you

are," replied Peveril, who observed the Countess's cheek redden,—"you know you would have done as much for the oldest and poorest cripple in the island. Why, the vault is under the burial ground of the chapel, and, for aught I know, under the ocean itself, such a roaring do the waves make in its vicinity. I think no one could remain there long, and retain his reason."

"It is an infernal hole," answered the Earl, "and I will have it built up one day—that is full certain.—But hold—hold—for God's sake, madam—what are you going to do?—Look at the seal before you put it to the warrant—you will see it is a choice antique cameo Cupid, riding on a flying fish—I had it for twenty zecchins, from Signor Furabosco at Rome—a most curious matter for an antiquary, but which will add little faith to a Manx warrant."

"How can you trifle thus, you simple boy?" said the Countess, with vexation in her tone and look. "Let me have your signet, or rather, take these warrants, and sign them yourself."

"My signet—my signet—Oh! you mean that

with the three monstrous legs, which I suppose was devised as the most preposterous device, to represent our most absurd Majesty of Man.—The signet—I have not seen it since I gave it to Gibbon, my monkey, to play with.—He did whine for it most piteously—I hope he has not gemmed the green breast of ocean with my symbol of sovereignty."

"Now, by Heaven," said the Countess, trembling, and colouring deeply with anger, "it was your father's signet! the last pledge which he sent, with his love to me, and his blessing to thee, the night before they murdered him at Bolton!"

"Mother, dearest mother," said the Earl, startled out of his apathy, and taking her hand, which he kissed tenderly, "I did but jest—the signet is safe—Peveril knows that it is so.—Go fetch it, Julian, for Heaven's sake—here are my keys—it is in the left hand drawer of my travelling cabinet.—Nay, mother, forgive me—it was but a *mauvaise plaisanterie*; only an ill imagined jest, ungracious, and in bad taste, I al-

low—but only one of Philip's follies. Look at me, dearest mother, and forgive me."

The Countess turned her eyes towards him, from which the tears were fast falling.

"Philip," she said, "you try me too unkindly, and too severely. If times are changed, as I have heard you allege—if the dignity of rank, and the high feelings of honour and duty, are now drowned in giddy jests and trifling pursuits, let *me* at least, who live secluded from all others, die without perceiving the change which has happened, and, above all, without perceiving it in mine own son. Let me not learn the general prevalence of this levity, which laughs at every sense of dignity or duty, through your personal disrespect—Let me not think that when I die——"

"Speak nothing of it, mother," said the Earl, interrupting her affectionately. "It is true, I cannot promise to be all my father and his fathers were; for we wear silk vests for their steel coats, and feathered beavers for their crested helmets. But believe me, though to be an absolute Palmerin of England is not in my nature, no

son ever loved a mother more dearly, or would do more to oblige her. And that you may own this, I will forthwith not only seal the warrants to the great endangerment of my precious fingers, but also read the same from end to end, as well as the dispatches thereunto appertaining."

A mother is easily appeased, even when most offended; and it was with an expanding heart that the Countess saw her son's very handsome features, while reading these papers, settle into an expression of deep seriousness, such as they seldom wore. It seemed to her as if the family likeness to his gallant but unfortunate father increased, when the expression of their countenances became similar in gravity. The Earl had no sooner perused the dispatches, which he did with great attention, than he rose and said, "Julian, come with me."

The Countess looked surprised. "I was wont to share your father's counsels, my son," she said; "but do not think that I wish to intrude myself upon yours. I am too well pleased to see you assume the power and the duty of thinking

for yourself, which is what I have so long urged you to do. Nevertheless, my experience, who have been so long administrator of your authority in Man, might not, I think, be superfluous to the matter in hand."

"Hold me excused, dearest mother," said the Earl, gravely. "The interference was none of my seeking; had you taken your own course, without consulting me, it had been well; but since I have entered on the affair—and it appears sufficiently important—I must transact it to the best of my own ability."

"Go then, my son," said the Countess, "and may Heaven enlighten thee with its counsel, since thou wilt have none of mine.—I trust that you, Master Peveril, will remind him of what is fit for his own honour; and that only a coward abandons his rights, and only a fool trusts his enemies."

The Earl answered not, but, taking Peveril by the arm, led him up a winding stair to his own apartment, and from thence into a projecting turret, where, amidst the roar of waves and sea-

mews' clang, he held with him the following conversation :—

" Peveril, it is well I looked into these warrants. My mother queens it at such a rate as may cost me not only my crown, which I care little for, but perhaps my head, which, though others may think little of, I would feel it an inconvenience to be deprived of."

" What on earth is the matter ?" said Peveril, with considerable anxiety.

" It seems," said the Earl of Derby, " that Old England, who takes a frolicsome brain-fever once every two or three years, for the benefit of her doctors, and the purification of the torpid lethargy brought on by peace and prosperity, is now gone stark staring mad on the subject of a real or supposed Popish Plot. I read one program on the subject, by a fellow called Oates, and thought it the most absurd foolery I ever perused. But that cunning fellow Shaftesbury, and some others amongst the great ones, have taken it up, and are driving on at such a rate as makes harness crack, and horses smoke for it. The King, who has sworn never to kiss the pillow his father

went to sleep on, temporizes and gives way to the current; the Duke of York, suspected and hated on account of his religion, is about to be driven to the continent; several principal Catholic nobles are in the Tower already; and the nation, like a bull at Tutbury-running, is persecuted with so many inflammatory rumours and pestilent pamphlets, that she has cocked her tail, flung up her heels, taken the bit betwixt her teeth, and is as furiously unmanageable as in the year 1642."

"All this you must have known already," said Peveril; "I wonder you told me not of news so important."

"It would have taken long to tell," said the Earl; "moreover, I desired to have you *solus*; thirdly, I was about to speak when my mother entered; and, to conclude, it was no business of mine. But these dispatches of my politic mother's private correspondent put a new face on the whole matter; for it seems some of the informers—a trade which, having become a thriving one, is now pursued by many—have dared to glance at the Countess herself as an agent in

this same plot—ay, and have found those that are willing enough to believe their report."

"On mine honour," said Peveril, "you both take it with great coolness. I think the Countess the most composed of the two; for, except her movement hither, she exhibited no mark of alarm, and moreover, seemed no way more anxious to communicate the matter to your lordship than decency rendered necessary."

"My good mother," said the Earl, "loves power, though it has cost her dear. I wish I could truly say that my neglect of business is entirely assumed in order to leave it in her hands, but that better motive combines with natural indolence. But she seems to have feared I should not think exactly like her in this emergency, and she was right in supposing so."

"How comes the emergency upon you?" said Julian; "and what form does the danger assume?"

"Marry, thus it is," said the Earl: "I need not bid you remember the affair of Colonel Christian. That man, besides his widow, who is pos-

sessed of large property—Dame Christian of Kirk-Truagh, whom you have often heard of, and perhaps seen—left a brother called Edward Christian, whom you never saw at all. Now this brother—but I dare say you know all about it."

"Not I, on my honour," said Peveril; "you know the Countess seldom or never alludes to the subject."

"Why," replied the Count, "I believe in her heart she is something ashamed of that gallant act of royalty and supreme jurisdiction, the consequences of which maimed my estate so cruelly.—Well, cousin, this same Edward Christian was one of the deemsters at the time, and, naturally enough, was unwilling to concur in the sentence which adjudged his *ainée* to be shot like a dog. My mother, who was then in high force, and not to be controlled by any one, would have served the deemster with the same sauce with which she dressed his brother, had he not been wise enough to fly from the island. Since that time, the thing has slept on all hands; and though we knew

that Deemster Christian made occasionally secret visits to his friends in the island, along with two or three other Puritans of the same stamp, and particularly a prick-eared rogue, called Bridgenorth, yet my mother, thank Heaven, has hitherto had the sense to connive at them, though, for some reason or other, she holds this Bridgenorth in especial disfavour."

"And why," said Peveril, forcing himself to speak, in order to conceal the very unpleasant surprise which he felt, "why does the Countess now depart from so prudent a line of conduct?"

"You must know the case is now different. The rogues are not satisfied with toleration—they would have supremacy. They have found friends in the present heat of the popular mind. My mother's name, and especially that of her confessor, Aldrick the Jesuit, has been mentioned in this beautiful maze of a plot, which, if any such at all exists, she knows as little of as you or I. However, she is a Catholic, and that is enough; and I have little doubt, that if the fellows could seize on our scrap of a kingdom here,

and cut all our throats, they would have the thanks of the present House of Commons, as willingly as old Christian had those of the Rump, for a similar service."

"From whence did you receive all this information?" said Peveril, again speaking, though by the same effort which a man makes who talks in his sleep.

"Aldrick has seen the Duke of York in secret, and his Royal Highness, who wept while he confessed his want of power to protect his friends—and it is no trifle will wring tears from him—told him to send us information that we should look to our safety, for that Deemster Christian and Bridgenorth were in the island, with secret and severe orders; that they had formed a considerable party there, and were like to be owned and protected in any thing they might undertake against us. The people of Ramsay and Castletown are unluckily discontented about some new regulation of the imposts; and, to tell you the truth, though I thought yesterday's sudden remove a whim of

my mother's, I am almost satisfied they would have blockaded us in Rushin Castle, where we could not have held out for lack of provisions. Here we are better supplied, and, as we are on our guard, it is likely the intended rising will not take place."

"And what is to be done in this emergency?" said Peveril.

"That is the very question, my gentle coz," answered the Earl. "My mother sees but one way of going to work, and that is by royal authority. Here are the warrants she had prepared, to search for, take, and apprehend the bodies of Edward Christian and Robert—no, Ralph Bridgenorth, and bring them to instant trial. No doubt, she would soon have had them in the Castle court, with a dozen of the old matchlocks levelled against them—that is her way of solving all sudden difficulties."

"But in which, I trust, you do not acquiesce, my lord," answered Peveril, whose thoughts instantly reverted to Alice, if they could ever be said to be absent from her.

"Truly, I acquiesce in no such matter," said the Earl. "William Christian's death cost me a fair half of my inheritance. I have no fancy to fall under the displeasure of my royal brother, King Charles, for a new escapade of the same kind. But how to pacify my mother, I know not. I would the insurrection would take place, and then, as we are better provided than they can be, we might knock the knaves on the head; and yet, since they began the fray, we should keep the law on our side."

"Were it not better," said Peveril, "if by any means these men could be induced to quit the island?"

"Surely," replied the Earl; "but that will be no easy matter—they are stubborn on principle, and empty threats will not move them. This storm-blast in London is wind in their sails, and they will run their length, you may depend on it. I have sent orders, however, to clap up the Manx-men upon whose assistance they depended, and if I can find the two worthies themselves, here are sloops enough in the harbour—I will

take the freedom to send them on a pretty distant voyage, and I hope matters will be settled before they return to give an account of it."

At this moment a soldier belonging to the garrison approached the two young men, with many bows and tokens of respect. "How now, friend?" said the Earl to him. "Leave off thy courtesies, and tell thy business."

The man, who was a native islander, answered in Manx, that he had a letter for his honour, Master Julian Peveril. Julian snatched the billet hastily, and asked whence it came.

"It was delivered to him by a young woman," the soldier replied, "who had given him a piece of money to deliver it into Master Peveril's own hand."

"Thou art a lucky fellow, Julian," said the Earl. "With that grave brow of thine, and thy character for sobriety and early wisdom, you set the girls a-wooing, without waiting till they are asked; whilst I, their drudge and vassal, waste both language and leisure, without getting a kind word or look, far less a billet-doux."

This the young Earl said with a smile of conscious triumph, as in fact he valued himself not a little upon the interest which he supposed himself to possess in the fair sex.

Meanwhile the letter impressed on Peveril a different train of thoughts from what his companion apprehended. It was in Alice's hand, and contained these few words:—

"I fear what I am going to do is wrong; but I must see you. Meet me at noon at Goddard Crovan's Stone, with as much secresy as you may."

The letter was signed only with the initials A. B.; but Julian had no difficulty in recognizing the hand-writing, which he had often seen, and which was remarkably beautiful. He stood suspended, for he saw the difficulty and impropriety of withdrawing himself from the Countess and his friend at this moment of impending danger; and yet, to neglect this invitation was not to be thought of. He paused in the utmost perplexity.

"Shall I read your riddle?" said the Earl.

"Go where love calls you—I will make an excuse to my mother—only, most grave anchorite, be hereafter more indulgent to the feelings of others than you have been hitherto, and blaspheme not the power of the little deity."

"Nay, but Cousin Derby——" said Peveril, and stopped short, for he really knew not what to say. Secured himself by a virtuous passion from the contagious influence of the time, he had seen with regret his noble kinsman mingle more in its irregularities than he approved of, and had sometimes played the part of a monitor. Circumstances seemed at present to give the Earl a right of retaliation. He kept his eye fixed on his friend, as if he waited till he should complete his sentence, and at length exclaimed, "What, cousin, quite *a-la-mort*! O, most judicious Julian! O, most precise Peveril! have you bestowed so much wisdom on me that you have none left for yourself? Come, be frank—tell me name and place—or say but the colour of the eyes of the most emphatic she—or do but let me have the pleasure to let me hear thee say, 'I love!'—con-

fess one touch of human frailty—conjugate the verb *amo*, and I will be a gentle schoolmaster, and you shall have, as father Richards used to say, when we were under his ferule, '*licentia exeundi*.'"

"Enjoy your pleasant humour at my expence, my lord," said Peveril; "I fairly will confess thus much, that I would fain, if it consisted with my honour and your safety, have two hours at my own disposal; the more especially as the manner in which I shall employ them may much concern the safety of the island."

"Very likely, I dare say," answered the Earl, still laughing. "No doubt you are summoned out by some Lady Politic Woudbe of the isle, to talk over some of the breast-laws; but never mind—go, and go speedily, that you may return as quick as possible. I expect no immediate explosion of this grand conspiracy. When the rogues see us on our guard, they will be cautious how they break out. Only, once more, make haste."

Peveril thought this last advice was not to be neglected; and glad to extricate himself from

the raillery of his cousin, walked down towards the gate of the Castle, meaning to cross over to the village, and there take horse at the Earl's stables, for the place of rendezvous.

CHAPTER IV.

Acasto. Can she not speak?
Oswald. If speech be only in accented sounds,
Framed by the tongue and lips, the maiden's dumb;
But if by quick and apprehensive look,
By motion, sign, and glance, to give each meaning,
Express as clothed in language, be term'd speech,
She hath that wondrous faculty; for her eyes,
Like the bright stars of heaven, can hold discourse,
Though it be mute and soundless.

Old Play.

At the head of the first flight of steps which descended towards the difficult and well-defended entrance of the Castle of Holm-Peel, Peveril was met and stopped by the Countess's train-bearer. This little creature, for she was of the least and slightest size of womankind, was exquisitely well formed in all her limbs, which the dress she usually wore, (a green silk tunic, of a peculiar form) set off to the best advantage. Her face was darker than the

usual hue of Europeans; and the profusion of long and silken hair, which, when she undid the braids in which she commonly wore it, fell down almost to her ancles, was also rather a foreign attribute. Her countenance resembled a most beautiful miniature; and there was a quickness, decision, and fire, in Fenella's look, and especially in her eyes, which was probably rendered yet more alert and acute, because, through the imperfection of her other organs, it was only by sight that she could obtain information of what passed around her.

The pretty mute was mistress of many little accomplishments which the Countess had caused to be taught to her in compassion for her forlorn situation, and which she learned with the most surprising quickness. Thus, for example, she was exquisite in the use of the needle, and so ready and ingenious a draughts-woman, that, like the ancient Mexicans, she sometimes made a hasty sketch with her pencil the means of conveying her ideas, either by direct or emblematical representation. Above all, in the art of ornamental writing, much studied at that period, Fenella was so

great a proficient, as to rival the fame of Messrs Snow, Shelley, and other masters of the pen, whose copy-books, preserved in the libraries of the curious, still shew the artists smiling on the frontispiece in all the honours of flowing gowns and full-bottomed wigs, to the eternal glory of caligraphy.

The little maiden had, besides these accomplishments, much ready wit and acuteness of intellect. With Lady Derby, and with the two young gentlemen, she was a great favourite, and used much freedom in conversing with them, by means of a system of signs which had been gradually established amongst them, and which served all ordinary purposes of communication.

But, though happy in the indulgence and favour of her mistress, from whom indeed she was seldom separate, Fenella was by no means a favourite with the rest of the household. In fact, it seemed that her temper, exasperated perhaps by a sense of her misfortune, was by no means equal to her abilities. She was very haughty in her demeanour, even towards the upper domestics, who in that establishment were of a

much higher rank and better birth than in the families of the nobility in general. These often complained, not only of her pride and reserve, but of her high and irascible temper and vindictive disposition. Her passionate propensity had been indeed idly encouraged by the young men, and particularly by the Earl, who sometimes amused himself with teazing her, that he might enjoy the various singular motions and murmurs by which she expressed her resentment. Towards him, these were of course only petulant and whimsical indications of pettish anger. But when she was angry with others of inferior degree—before whom she did not control herself—the expression of her passion, unable to display itself in language, had something even frightful, so singular were the tones, contortions, and gestures, to which she had recourse. The lower domestics, to whom she was liberal almost beyond her apparent means, observed her with much deference and respect, but much more from fear than from any real attachment; for the caprices of her temper displayed themselves even in her gifts; and those who most frequently

shared her bounty, seemed by no means assured of the benevolence of the motives which dictated her liberality.

All these peculiarities led to a conclusion consonant with Manx superstition. Devout believers in all the legends of fairies so dear to the Celtic tribes, the Manx people held it for certainty that the elves were in the habit of carrying off mortal children before baptism, and leaving in the cradle of the new-born babe one of their own brood, which was almost always imperfect in some one or other of the organs proper to humanity. Such a being they conceived Fenella to be ; and the smallness of her size, her dark complexion, her long locks of silken hair, the singularity of her manners and tones, as well as the caprices of her temper, were to their thinking all attributes of the irritable, fickle, and dangerous race from which they supposed her to be sprung. And it seemed, that although no jest appeared to offend her more than when Lord Derby called her in sport the Elfin Queen, or otherwise alluded to her supposed connexion with " the pigmy folk," yet still her perpetually

affecting to wear the colour of green, proper to the fairies, as well as some other peculiarities, seemed voluntarily assumed by her, in order to countenance the superstition, perhaps because it gave her more authority among the lower orders.

Many were the tales circulated respecting the Countess's *Elf*, as Fenella was currently called in the island; and the malcontents of the stricter persuasion were convinced, that no one but a Papist and a malignant would have kept near her person a creature of such doubtful origin. They conceived that Fenella's deafness and dumbness were only towards those of this world, and that she had been heard talking, and singing, and laughing, most elvishly, with the invisibles of her own race. They alleged, also, that she had a *Double*, a sort of apparition resembling her, which slept in the Countess's anti-room, or bore her train, or wrought in her cabinet, while the real Fenella joined the song of the mermaids on the moonlight sands, or the dance of the fairies in the haunted valley of Glenmoy, or on the heights of Snawfell and Barool. The centinels, too, would have sworn they had seen the little

maiden trip past them in their solitary night-walks, without their having it in their power to challenge her, any more than if they had been as mute as herself. To all this mass of absurdities the better informed paid no more attention than to the usual idle exaggerations of the vulgar, which so frequently connect that which is unusual with what is supernatural.

Such, in form and habits, was the little female, who, holding in her hand a small old-fashioned ebony rod, which might have passed for a divining wand, confronted Julian on the top of the flight of steps which led down the rock from the Castle-court. We ought to observe, that as Julian's manner to the unfortunate girl had been always gentle, and free from those teazing jests in which his gay friend indulged, with less regard to the peculiarity of her situation and feelings; so Fenella, on her part, had usually shewn much greater deference to him than to any of the household, her mistress, the Countess, always excepted.

On the present occasion, planting herself in the very midst of the narrow descent, so as to

make it impossible for Peveril to pass by her, she proceeded to put him to the question by a series of gestures, which we will endeavour to describe. She commenced by extending her hand slightly, accompanied with the sharp inquisitive look which served her as a note of interrogation. This was meant as an inquiry if he was going to a distance. Julian, in reply, extended his arm more than half, to intimate that the distance was considerable. Fenella looked grave, shook her head, and pointed to the Countess's window, which was visible from the spot where they stood. Peveril smiled, and nodded, to intimate there was no danger in quitting her mistress for a short space. The little maiden next touched an eagle's feather which she wore in her hair, a sign which she usually employed to designate the Earl, and then looked inquisitively at Julian once more, as if to say, "Goes he with you?" Peveril shook his head, and, somewhat wearied by these interrogatories, smiled, and made an effort to pass. Fenella frowned, struck the end of her ebony rod perpendicularly on the ground, and

again shook her head, as if opposing his departure. But finding that Julian persevered in his purpose, she suddenly assumed another and a milder mood, held him by the skirt of his cloak with one hand, and raised the other in an imploring attitude, whilst every feature of her lively countenance was composed into the like expression of supplication; and the fire of the large dark eyes, which seemed in general so keen and piercing as almost to over-animate the little sphere to which they belonged, seemed quenched, for the moment, in the large drops which hung on her long eye-lashes, but without falling.

Julian Peveril was far from being void of sympathy towards the poor girl, whose motives in opposing his departure seemed to be her affectionate apprehension for her mistress's safety. He endeavoured to reassure her by smiles, and at the same time, by such signs as he could devise, to intimate that there was no danger, and that he would return presently; and having succeeded in extricating his cloak from her grasp, and in passing her on the stair, he began to descend

the steps as speedily as he could, in order to avoid further importunity.

But with activity much greater than his, the dumb maiden hastened to intercept him, and succeeded by throwing herself, at the imminent risk of life and limb, a second time into the pass which he was descending, so as to interrupt his purpose. In order to achieve this, she was obliged to let herself drop a considerable height from the wall of a small flanking battery, where two small patereroes were placed to scour the pass, in case any enemy could have mounted so high. Julian had scarce time to shudder at her purpose, as he beheld her about to spring from the parapet, ere, like a thing of gossamer, she stood light and uninjured on the rocky platform below. He endeavoured, by the gravity of his look and gesture, to make her understand how much he blamed her rashness; but the reproof, though obviously quite intelligible, was entirely thrown away. A hasty wave of her hand intimated how she contemned the danger and the remonstrance; while, at the same time, she instantly resumed, with more eagerness than

before, the earnest and impressive gestures by which she endeavoured to detain him in the fortress.

Julian was somewhat staggered by her pertinacity. " Is it possible," he thought, " that any danger can approach the Countess, of which this poor maiden has, by the extreme acuteness of her observation, obtained knowledge which has escaped others ?"

He signed to Fenella hastily to give him the tablets and the pencil which she usually carried with her, and wrote on them the question, " Is there danger near to your mistress, that you thus stop me ?"

" There is danger around the Countess," was the answer instantly written down ; " but there is much more in your own purpose."

" How ?—what ?—what know you of my purpose ?" said Julian, forgetting, in his surprise, that the party he addressed had neither ear to comprehend, nor voice to reply to uttered language. She had regained her book in the meantime, and sketched, with a rapid pencil, on one of the leaves, a scene which she shewed to Julian.

To his infinite surprise he recognized Goddard Cronnan's stone, a remarkable monument, of which she had given the outline with sufficient accuracy; together with a male and female figure, which, though only indicated by a few slight touches of the pencil, bore yet, he thought, some resemblance to himself and Alice Bridgenorth.

When he had gazed on the sketch for an instant with surprise, Fenella took the book from his hand, laid her finger upon the drawing, and slowly and sternly shook her head, with a frown which seemed to prohibit the meeting which was there represented. Julian, however, though disconcerted, was in no shape disposed to submit to the authority of his monitress. By whatever means she, who so seldom stirred from the Countess's apartment, had become acquainted with a secret which he thought entirely his own, he esteemed it the more necessary to keep the appointed rendezvous, that he might learn from Alice, if possible, how the secret had transpired. He had also formed the intention of seeking out Bridgenorth; entertaining an idea that a person so rea-

sonable and calm as he had shewn himself in their late conference, might be persuaded, when he understood that the Countess was aware of his intrigues, to put an end to her danger and his own, by withdrawing from the island. And could he succeed in this point, he should at once, he thought, render a material benefit to the father of his beloved Alice—remove the Earl from his state of anxiety—save the Countess from a second time putting her feudal jurisdiction in opposition to that of the Crown of England—and secure quiet possession of the island to her and her family.

With this scheme of mediation in his mind, Peveril determined to rid himself of the opposition of Fenella to his departure, with less ceremony than he had hitherto observed towards her; and suddenly lifting up the damsel in his arms before she was aware of his purpose, he turned about, set her down on the steps above him, and began to descend the pass himself as speedily as possible. It was then that the dumb maiden gave full course to the vehemence of her disposition; and clapping her hands repeatedly, expressed her

displeasure in a sound, or rather a shriek, so extremely dissonant, that it resembled more the cry of a wild creature, than any thing which could have been uttered by female organs. Peveril was so astounded at the scream as it rung through the living rocks, that he could not help stopping and looking back in alarm, to satisfy himself that she had not sustained some injury. He saw her, however, perfectly safe, though her face seemed inflamed and distorted with passion. She stamped at him with her foot, shook her clenched hand, and turning her back upon him, without further adieu, ran up the rude steps as lightly as a kid could have tripped up that rugged ascent, and paused for a moment at the summit of the first flight.

Julian could feel nothing but wonder and compassion for the impotent passion of a being so unfortunately circumstanced, cut off, as it were, from the rest of mankind, and incapable of receiving in childhood that moral discipline which teaches us mastery of our wayward passions, ere yet they have attained their meridian strength and violence. He waved his hand to her, in token of

amicable farewell; but she only replied by once more menacing him with her little hand clenched; and then ascending the rocky staircase with almost preternatural speed, was soon out of sight.

Julian, on his part, gave no further consideration to her conduct or its motives, but hastening to the village on the mainland, where the stables of the Castle were situated, he again took his palfrey from the stall, and was soon mounted and on his way to the appointed place of rendezvous, much marvelling, as he ambled forwards with speed far greater than was promised by the diminutive size of animal he was mounted on, what could have happened to produce so great a change in Alice's conduct towards him, that in place of enjoining his absence as usual, or recommending his departure from the island, she should now voluntarily invite him to a meeting. Under impression of the various doubts which succeeded each other in his imagination, he sometimes pressed Fairy's sides with his legs; sometimes laid his holly rod lightly on his neck; sometimes incited him by his voice, for the mettled animal needed neither whip nor spur, and achieved the

distance betwixt the Castle of Holm-peel and the stone at Goddard Crovan, at the rate of twelve miles within the hour.

The monumental stone, designed to commemorate some feat of an ancient King of Man, which had been long forgotten, was erected on the side of a narrow and lonely valley, or rather glen, secluded from observation by the steepness of its banks, upon a projection of which stood the tall, shapeless, solitary rock, frowning, like a shrouded giant, over the brawling of the small rivulet which watered the ravine.

CHAPTER V.

This a love-meeting? See the maiden mourns,
And the sad suitor bends his looks on earth.
There's more hath past between them than belongs
To Love's sweet sorrows.

Old Play.

As he approached the monument of Goddard Crovan, Julian cast many an anxious glance to see whether any object visible beside the huge grey stone should apprize him, whether he was anticipated, at the appointed place of rendezvous, by her who had named it. Nor was it long before the flutter of a mantle, which the breeze slightly waved, and the motion necessary to replace it upon the wearer's shoulders, made him aware that Alice had already reached their place of meeting. One instant set the palfrey at liberty, with slackened girths and loosened reins,

to pick its own way through the dell at will; another placed Julian Peveril by the side of Alice Bridgenorth.

That Alice should extend her hand to her lover, as with the ardour of a young greyhound he bounded over the obstacles of the rugged path, was as natural as that Julian, seizing on the hand so kindly stretched out, should devour it with kisses, and, for a moment or two, without reprehension; while the other hand, which should have aided in the liberation of its fellow, served to hide the blushes of the fair owner. But Alice, young as she was, and attached to Julian by such long habits of kindly intimacy, still knew well how to subdue the tendency of her own treacherous affections.

"This is not right," she said, extricating her hand from Julian's grasp, "this is not right, Julian. If I have been too rash in admitting such a meeting as the present, it is not you that should make me sensible of my folly."

Julian Peveril's mind had been early illumined with that touch of romantic fire which

deprives passion of selfishness, and confers on it the high and refined tone of generous and disinterested devotion. He let go the hand of Alice with as much respect as he could have paid to that of a princess; and when she seated herself upon a rocky fragment, over which nature had stretched a cushion of moss and lichen, interspersed with wild flowers, backed with a bush of copsewood, he took his place beside her, indeed, but at such distance as to intimate the duty of an attendant, who was there only to hear and to obey. Alice Bridgenorth became more assured as she observed the power which she possessed over her lover; and the self-command which Peveril exhibited, which other damsels in her situation might have judged inconsistent with intensity of passion, she appreciated more justly, as a proof of his respectful and disinterested sincerity. She recovered, in addressing him, the tone of confidence which rather belonged to the scenes of their early acquaintance, than to those which had passed betwixt them since Peveril had disclosed his affection, and

thereby had brought restraint upon their intercourse.

"Julian," she said, "your visit of yesterday —your most ill-timed visit, has distressed me much. It has misled my father—it has endangered you. At all risks, I resolved that you should know this, and blame me not if I have taken a bold and imprudent step in desiring this solitary interview, since you are aware how little poor Deborah is to be trusted."

"Can you fear misconstruction from me, Alice?" replied Peveril, warmly; "from me, whom you have thus highly favoured—thus deeply obliged?"

"Cease your protestations, Julian," answered the maiden, "they do but make me the more sensible that I have acted over boldly. But I did for the best.—I could not see you, whom I have known so long—you, who say you regard me with partiality——"

"*Say* that I regard you with partiality!" interrupted Peveril in his turn. "Ah, Alice, what a cold and doubtful phrase you have used

to express the most devoted, the most sincere affection !"

"Well, then," said Alice, sadly, "we will not quarrel about words; but do not again interrupt me.--I could not, I say, see you, who, I believe, regard me with sincere though vain and fruitless attachment, rush blindfold into a snare, deceived and seduced by those very feelings towards me."

"I understand you not, Alice," said Peveril; "nor can I see any danger to which I am at present exposed. The sentiments which your father has expressed towards me, are of a nature irreconcileable with hostile purposes. If he is not offended with the bold wishes I may have formed, and his whole behaviour shews the contrary, I know not a man on earth from whom I have the least cause to apprehend any danger or ill will."

"My father," said Alice, "means well by his country, and well by you; yet I sometimes fear he may rather injure than serve his good cause; and still more do I dread, that in attempt-

ng to engage you as an auxiliary, he forgets those ties which ought to bind you, and I am sure which will bind you, to a different line of conduct from his own."

"You lead me into still deeper darkness, Alice," answered Peveril. "That your father's especial line of politics differs widely from mine, I know well; but how many instances have occurred, even during the bloody scenes of civil warfare, of good and worthy men laying the prejudice of party affections aside, and regarding each other with respect, and even with friendly attachment, without being false to principle on either side?"

"It may be so," said Alice; "but such is not the league which my father desires to form with you, and that to which he hopes your misplaced partiality towards his daughter may afford a motive for your forming with him."

"And what is it," said Peveril, "which I would refuse, with such a prospect before me?"

"Treachery and dishonour!" replied Alice; "whatever would render you unworthy of the

poor boon at which you aim—ay, were it more worthless than I confess it to be."

"Would your father," said Peveril, as he unwillingly received the impression which Alice designed to convey,—"would he, whose views of duty are so strict and severe—would he wish to involve me in aught, to which such harsh epithets as treachery and dishonour can be applied with the slightest shadow of truth?"

"Do not mistake me, Julian," replied the maiden; "my father is incapable of requesting aught of you that is not to his thinking just and honourable; nay, he conceives that he only claims from you a debt, which is due as a creature to the Creator, and as a man to your fellow-men."

"So guarded, where can be the danger of our intercourse?" replied Julian. "If he be resolved to require, and I determined to accede to, nothing save what flows from conviction, what have I to fear, Alice? and how is my intercourse with your father dangerous? Believe not so; his speech has already made impression on me in some particulars, and he listened with

candour and patience to the objections which I made occasionally. You do Master Bridgenorth less than justice in confounding him with the unreasonable bigots in policy and religion, who can listen to no argument but what favours their own prepossessions."

"Julian," replied Alice, "it is you who misjudge my father's powers, and his purpose with respect to you, and who overrate your own powers of resistance. I am but a girl, but I have been taught by circumstances to think for myself, and to consider the character of those who are around me. My father's views in ecclesiastical and civil policy, are as dear to him as the life which he cherishes only to advance them. They have been, with little alteration, his companions through life. They brought him at one period into prosperity, and when they suited not the times, he suffered for having held them. They have become not only a part, but the very dearest part, of his existence. If he shews them not to you at first, in the inflexible strength which they have acquired over his mind, do not

believe that they are the less powerful. He who desires to make converts, must begin by degrees. But that he should sacrifice to an inexperienced young man, whose ruling motive he will term a childish passion, any part of those treasured principles which he has maintained through good repute and bad repute—O, do not dream of such an impossibility! If you meet at all, you must be the wax, he the seal—you must receive—he must bestow an absolute impression."

"That," said Peveril, "were unreasonable. I will frankly avow to you, Alice, that I am not a sworn bigot to the opinions entertained by my father, much as I respect his person. I would that our Cavaliers, or whatsoever they are pleased to call themselves, would have some more charity towards those who differ from them in Church and State. But to hope that I would surrender the principles in which I have lived, were to suppose me capable of deserting my benefactress, and breaking the heart of my parents."

"Even so I judged of you; and, therefore, I asked this interview, to conjure that you will

break off all intercourse with our family—return to your parents—or, what will be much safer, visit the continent once more, and abide till God sends better days to England, for these are black with many a storm."

"And can you bid me go, Alice?" said the young man, taking her unresisting hand; "can you bid me go, and yet own an interest in my fate?—Can you bid me, for fear of dangers, which, as a man, as a gentleman, and a loyal one, I am bound to shew my face to, meanly abandon my parents, my friends, my country—suffer the existence of evils which I might aid to prevent, forego the prospect of doing such little good as might be in my power—fall from an active and honourable station, into the condition of a fugitive and time-server—Can you bid me do all this, Alice? Can you bid me do all this, and, in the same breath, bid farewell for ever to you and happiness?—It is impossible—I cannot surrender at once my love and my honour."

"There is no remedy," said Alice, but she could not suppress a sigh while she said so—

"there is no remedy—none whatever. What we might have been to each other, placed in more favourable circumstances, it avails not to think of now; and, circumstanced as we are, with open war about to break out betwixt our parents and friends, we can be but well-wishers—cold and distant well-wishers, who must part on this spot, and at this hour, never to meet again."

"No, by Heaven!" said Peveril, animated at the same time by his own feelings, and by the sight of the emotions which his companion in vain endeavoured to suppress,—"No, by Heaven!" he exclaimed, "we part not—Alice, we part not. If I am to leave my native land, you shall be my companion in my exile. What have you to lose?—Whom have you to abandon?—Your father?—The good old cause, as it is termed, is dearer to him than a thousand daughters; and setting him aside, what tie is there between you and this barren isle—between my Alice and any spot of the British dominions, where her Julian does not sit by her?"

"Oh, Julian," answered the maiden, "why

make my duty more painful by visionary projects, which you ought not to name, or I to listen to?—Your parents—my father—it cannot be!"

"Fear not for my parents, Alice," replied Julian, and pressing close to his companion's side, he ventured to throw his arm around her; "they love me, and they will soon learn to love in Alice, the only being on earth who could have rendered their son happy. And for your own father, when State and Church intrigues allow him to bestow a thought upon you, will he not think that your happiness, your security, is better cared for when you are my wife, than were you to continue under the mercenary charge of yonder foolish woman? What could his pride desire better for you, than the establishment which will one day be mine? Come then, Alice, and since you condemn me to banishment—since you deny me a share in those stirring achievements which are about to agitate England—come! do you, for you only can, do you reconcile me to exile and inaction, and give happiness to one, who, for your sake, is willing to resign honour."

"It cannot—it cannot be," said Alice, faultering as she uttered her negative. "And yet," she said, "how many in my place—left alone and unprotected, as I am—But I must not—I must not—for your sake, Julian, I must not."

"Say not for my sake you must not, Alice," said Peveril, eagerly; "this is adding insult to cruelty. If you will do aught for my sake, you will say yes; or you will suffer this dear head to drop on my shoulder—the slightest sign—the moving of an eye-lid, shall signify consent. All shall be prepared within an hour; within another, the priest shall unite us; and within a third, we leave the isle behind us, and seek our fortunes on the continent." But while he spoke, in joyful anticipation of the consent which he implored, Alice found means to collect together her resolution, which, staggered by the eagerness of her lover, the impulse of her own affection, and the singularity of her situation,—seeming, in her case, to justify what would have been most blameable in another,—had more than half abandoned her.

The result of a moment's deliberation was fa-

tal to Julian's proposal. She extricated herself from the arm which had pressed her to his side —arose, and repelling his attempts to approach or detain her, said, with a simplicity not unmingled with dignity, " Julian, I always knew I risked much in inviting you to this meeting ; but I did not guess that I could have been so cruel both to you and to myself, as to suffer you to discover what you have to-day seen too plainly— that I love you better than you love me. But since you do know it, I will shew you that Alice's love is disinterested—She will not bring an ignoble name into your ancient house. If hereafter in your line there should arise some who may think the claims of the hierarchy too exorbitant, the powers of the crown too extensive, men shall not say these ideas were derived from Alice Bridgenorth, their whig grand-dame."

" Can you speak thus, Alice ?" said her lover. " Can you use such expressions ? and are you not sensible that they shew plainly it is your own pride, not regard for me, that makes you resist the happiness of both ?"

"Not so, Julian; not so," answered Alice, with tears in her eyes; "it is the command of duty to us both—of duty, which we cannot transgress without risking our happiness here and hereafter. Think what I, the cause of all, should feel, when your father frowns, your mother weeps, your noble friends stand aloof, and you, even you yourself, shall have made the painful discovery, that you have incurred the contempt and resentment of all to satisfy a boyish passion; and that the poor beauty, once sufficient to mislead you, was gradually declining under the influence of grief and vexation. This I will not risk. I see distinctly it is best we should here break off and part; and I thank God, who gives me light enough to perceive, and strength enough to withstand, your folly as well as my own. Farewell, then, Julian; but first take the solemn advice which I called you hither to impart to you:—Shun my father—you cannot walk in his paths and be true to gratitude and to honour. What he doth from pure and honourable motives, you cannot aid him in, except upon the suggestion of a silly and in-

terested passion, at variance with all the engagements you have formed at coming into life."

"Once more, Alice," answered Julian, "I understand you not. If a course of action is good, it needs no vindication from the actor's motives—if bad, it can derive none."

"You cannot blind me with your sophistry, Julian," replied Alice Bridgenorth, "any more than you can overpower me with your passion. Had the patriarch destined his son to death upon any less ground than faith and humble obedience to a divine commandment, he had meditated a murder, and not a sacrifice. In our late bloody and lamentable wars, how many drew swords on either sides, from the purest and most honourable motives? How many from the culpable suggestions of ambition, self-seeking, and love of plunder? Yet while they marched in the same ranks, and spurred their horses at the same trumpet-sound, the memory of the former are dear to us as patriots or loyalists—that of those who acted on mean or unworthy promptings, is either execrated or forgotten. Once more, I warn you, avoid

my father—leave this island, which will be soon agitated by strange incidents—while you stay, be on your guard—distrust every thing—be jealous of every one, even of those to whom it may seem almost impossible, from circumstances, to attach a shadow of suspicion—trust not the very stones of the most secret apartment in Holm-Peel, for that which hath wings shall carry the matter."

Here Alice broke off suddenly, and with a faint shriek; for, stepping from behind the stunted copse which had concealed him, her father stood unexpectedly before them.

The reader cannot have forgotten that this was the second time in which the stolen interviews of the lovers had been interrupted by the unexpected apparition of Major Bridgenorth. On this second occasion his countenance exhibited anger mixed with solemnity, like that of the spirit to a ghost-seer, whom he upbraids with having neglected a charge imposed at their first meeting. Even his anger, however, produced no more violent emotion than a cold sternness of manner in his speech and action. "I thank you, Alice,"

he said to his daughter, "for the pains you have taken to traverse my designs towards this young man, and towards yourself. I thank you for the hints you have thrown out before my appearance, the suddenness of which alone has prevented you from carrying your confidence to a pitch which would have placed my life and that of others at the discretion of a boy, who, when the cause of God and his country is laid before him, has not leisure to think of them, so much is he occupied with such a baby-face as thine." Alice, pale as death, continued motionless, with her eyes fixed on the ground, without attempting the slightest reply to the ironical reproaches of her father.

"And you," continued Major Bridgenorth, turning from his daughter to her lover,—"you, sir, have well repaid the liberal confidence which I placed in you with so little reserve. You I have to thank also for some lessons, which may teach me to rest satisfied with the churl's blood which nature has poured into my veins, and with the rude nurture which my father allotted to me."

"I understand you not, sir," replied Julian Peveril, who, feeling the necessity of saying

something, could not, at the moment, find anything more fitting to say.

"Yes, sir, I thank you," said Major Bridgenorth, in the same cold sarcastic tone, "for having shewn me that breach of hospitality, infringement of good faith, and such like peccadilloes, are not utterly foreign to the mind and conduct of the heir of a knightly house of twenty descents. It is a great lesson to me, sir; for hitherto I had thought with the vulgar, that gentle manners went with gentle blood. But perhaps courtesy is too chivalrous a quality to be wasted in intercourse with a round-headed fanatic like myself."

"Major Bridgenorth," said Julian, "whatever has happened in this interview which may have displeased you, has been the result of feelings suddenly and strongly animated by the crisis of the moment—nothing was premeditated."

"Not even your meeting, I suppose?" replied Bridgenorth, in the same cold tone. "You, sir, wandered hither from Holm-Peel—my daughter strolled forth from the Black-Fort; and chance, doubtless, assigned you a meeting by the stone of

Goddard Crovan?—Young man, disgrace yourself by no more apologies—they are worse than useless.—And you, maiden, who, in your fear of losing your lover, could verge on betraying what might have cost a father his life—begone to your home. I will talk with you at more leisure, and teach you practically those duties which you seem to have forgotten."

"On my honour, sir," said Julian, "your daughter is guiltless of all that can offend you; she resisted every offer which the headstrong violence of my passion urged me to press upon her."

"And, in brief," said Bridgenorth, "I am not to believe that you have met at this remote place of rendezvous by Alice's special appointment?"

Peveril knew not what to reply, and Bridgenorth again signed with his hand to his daughter to withdraw.

"I obey you, father," said Alice, who had by this time recovered from the extremity of her surprise,—"I obey you; but Heaven is my witness that you do me more than injustice in sus-

pecting me capable of betraying your secrets, even had it been necessary to save my own life or that of Julian. That you are walking in a dangerous path I well know; but you do it with your eyes open, and are actuated by motives of which you can estimate the worth and value. My sole wish was, that this young man should not enter blindfold on the same perils; and I had a right to warn him, since the feelings by which he is hood-winked had a direct reference to me."

"'Tis well, minion," said Bridgenorth, "you have spoken your say. Retire, and let me complete the conference which you have so considerately commenced."

"I go, sir," said Alice.—"Julian, to you my last words are, and I would speak them with my last breath—Farewell, and caution."

She turned from them, disappeared among the underwood, and was seen no more.

"A true specimen of womankind," said her father, looking after her, "who would give the cause of nations up, rather than endanger a hair of her lover's head.—You, Master Peveril, doubt-

less, hold her opinion, that the best love is a safe love?"

"Were danger alone in my way," said Peveril, much surprised at the softened tone in which Bridgenorth made this observation, "there are few things which I would not face to—to—deserve your good opinion."

"Or rather to win my daughter's hand," said Bridgenorth. "Well, young man, one thing has pleased me in your conduct, though of much I have my reasons to complain—one thing *has* pleased me. You have surmounted that bounding wall of aristocratical pride in which your father, and, I suppose, his fathers, remained imprisoned, as in the precincts of a feudal fortress—you have leaped over this barrier, and shewn yourself not unwilling to ally yourself with a family, whom your father spurns as low-born and ignoble."

However favourably this speech sounded towards success in his suit, it so broadly stated the consequences of that success so far as his parents were concerned, that Julian felt it in the last degree difficult to reply. At length, perceiving that

Major Bridgenorth seemed resolved quietly to await his answer, he mustered up courage to say, "The feelings which I entertain towards your daughter, Master Bridgenorth, are of a nature to supersede many other considerations, to which, in any other case, I should feel it my duty to give the most reverential attention. I will not disguise from you, that my father's prejudices against such a match would be very strong; but I devoutly believe they would disappear when he came to know the merit of Alice Bridgenorth, and to be sensible that she only could make his son happy."

"In the meanwhile, you are desirous to complete the union which you propose without the knowledge of your parents, and take the chance of their being hereafter reconciled to it? So I understand from the proposal which you made but lately to my daughter."

The turns of human nature, and of human passion, are so irregular and uncertain, that although Julian had but a few minutes before urged to Alice a private marriage, and an elopement to the continent, as a measure upon which the whole happiness of his life depended, the proposal seem-

ed not to him half so delightful when stated by the calm, cold, dictatorial accents of her father. It sounded no longer like the dictates of ardent passion, throwing all other considerations aside, but as a distinct surrender of the dignity of his house to one who seemed to consider their relative situation as the triumph of Bridgenorth over Peveril. He was mute for a moment, in the vain attempt to shape his answer so as at once to intimate acquiescence in what Bridgenorth stated, and a vindication of his own regard for his parents, and for the honour of his house.

This delay gave rise to suspicion, and Bridgenorth's eye gleamed, and his lip quivered, while he gave vent to it. "Hark ye, young man—deal openly with me in this matter, if you would not have me think you the execrable villain who would have seduced an unhappy girl, under promises which he never designed to fulfil. Let me but suspect this, and you shall see, on the spot, how far your pride and your pedigree will preserve you against the just vengeance of a father."

"You do me wrong," said Peveril—"you do

me infinite wrong, Major Bridgenorth. I am incapable of the infamy which you allude to. The proposal I made to your daughter was as sincere as ever was offered by man to woman. I only hesitated, because you think it necessary to examine me so very closely; and to possess yourself of all my purposes and sentiments, in their fullest extent, without explaining to me the tendency of your own."

"Your proposal, then, shapes itself thus," said Bridgenorth:—"You are willing to lead my only child into exile from her native country, to give her a claim to kindness and protection from your family, which you know will be disregarded, on condition I consent to bestow her hand on you, with a fortune sufficient to have matched that of your ancestors, when they had most reason to boast of their wealth. This, young man, seems no equal bargain. And yet," he continued, after a momentary pause, "so little do I value the goods of this world, that it might not be utterly beyond thy power to reconcile me to the match which you have proposed to me, however unequal it may appear."

"Shew me but the means which can propitiate your favour, Major Bridgenorth," said Peveril,—"for I will not doubt that they will be consistent with my honour and duty,—and you shall soon see how eagerly I will obey your directions, or submit to your conditions."

"They are summed in few words," answered Bridgenorth. "Be an honest man, and the friend of your country."

"No one has ever doubted," replied Peveril, "that I am both."

"Pardon me," replied the Major; "no one has, as yet, seen you shew yourself either. Interrupt me not—I question not your will to be both; but you have hitherto neither had the light nor the opportunity necessary for the display of your principles, or the service of your country. You have lived when an apathy of mind, succeeding to the agitations of the Civil War, had made men indifferent to state affairs, and more willing to cultivate their own ease, than to stand in the gap when the Lord was pleading with Israel. But we are Englishmen; and with us such unnatural lethargy cannot continue long

Already, many of those who most desired the return of Charles Stuart, regard him as a King whom Heaven, importuned by our entreaties, gave to us in His anger. His unlimited licence —an example so readily followed by the young and the gay around him—has disgusted the minds of all sober and thinking men. I had not now held conference with you in this intimate fashion, were I not aware that you, Master Julian, were free from such stain of the times. Heaven, that rendered the King's course of license fruitful, hath denied issue to his bed of wedlock; and in the gloomy and stern character of his bigotted successor, we already see what sort of monarch shall succeed to the crown of England. This is a critical period, at which it necessarily becomes the duty of all men to step forward, each in his degree, and aid in rescuing the country which gave us birth." Peveril remembered the warning which he had received from Alice, and bent his eyes on the ground, without returning any reply. "How is it, young man," continued Bridgenorth, after a pause; "so young as thou art, and bound by

no ties of kindred profligacy with the enemies of your country, can you be already hardened to the claims she may form on you at this crisis?"

"It were easy to answer you generally, Major Bridgenorth," replied Peveril—"It were easy to say that my country cannot make a claim on me which I will not promptly answer at the risk of lands and life. But in dealing thus generally, we should but deceive each other. What is the nature of this call? By whom is it to be sounded? And what are to be the results? for I think you have already seen enough of the evils of civil war, to be wary of again awakening its terrors in a peaceful and happy country."

"They that are drenched with poisonous narcotics," said the Major, "must be awakened by their physicians, though it were with the sound of the trumpet. Better that men should die bravely, with their arms in their hands, like free-born Englishmen, than that they should slide into the bloodless but dishonoured grave which slavery opens for its vassals—But it is not of war that I was about to speak," he added, assuming a milder

tone. "The evils of which England now complains, are such as can be remedied by the wholesome administration of her own laws, even in the state in which they are still suffered to exist. Have these laws not a right to the support of every individual who lives under them? Have they not a right to yours?"

As he seemed to pause for an answer, Peveril replied, "I have to learn, Major Bridgenorth, how the laws of England have become so far weakened as to require such support as mine. When that is made plain to me, no man will more willingly discharge the duty of a faithful liegeman to the law as well as the King. But the laws of England are under the guardianship of upright and learned judges, and of a gracious monarch."

"And of a House of Commons," interrupted Bridgenorth, "no longer doating upon restored monarchy, but awakened, as with a peal of thunder, to the perilous state of our religion, and of our freedom. I appeal to your own conscience, Julian Peveril, whether this awakening hath not been in time, since you yourself know, and none

better than you, the secret but rapid strides which Rome has made to erect her Dagon of idolatry within our Protestant land."

Here Julian seeing, or thinking he saw, the drift of Bridgenorth's suspicions, hastened to exculpate himself from the suspicion of favouring the Roman Catholic religion. "It is true," he said, "I have been educated in a family where that faith is professed by one honoured individual, and that I have since travelled in Popish countries; but even for these very reasons I have seen Popery too closely to be friendly to its tenets. The bigotry of the laymen—the persevering arts of the priesthood—the perpetual intrigue for the extension of the forms without the spirit of religion—the usurpation of that church over the consciences of men—and her impious pretensions to infallibility, are as inconsistent in my mind as they can seem in yours, with common sense, rational liberty, freedom of conscience, and pure religion."

"Spoken like the son of your excellent mother," said Bridgenorth, grasping his hand; "for whose sake I have endured to suffer so much

from your house unrequited, even when the means of requital were in my own hand."

"It was indeed from the instructions of that excellent parent," said Peveril, "that I was enabled, in my early youth, to resist and repel the insidious attacks made upon my religious faith by the Catholic priests into whose company I was necessarily thrown. Like her, I trust to live and die in the faith of the reformed Church of England."

"The Church of England!" said Bridgenorth, dropping his young friend's hand, but presently resuming it—"Alas! that church, as now constituted, usurps scarcely less than Rome herself upon men's consciences and liberties; yet out of the weakness of this half-reformed church, may God be pleased to work out deliverance to England, and praise to Himself. I must not forget, that one whose services have been in the cause incalculable, wears the garb of an English priest, and hath had Episcopal ordination. It is not for us to challenge the instrument, so that our escape is achieved from the net of the fowler. Enough, that I find thee not as yet enlightened with the

purer doctrine, but prepared to profit by it when the spark shall reach thee. Enough, in especial, that I find thee willing to uplift thy testimony, to cry aloud and spare not against the errors and arts of the Church of Rome. But remember, what thou hast now said thou wilt soon be called upon to justify, in a manner the most solemn—the most awful."

"What I have said," replied Julian Peveril, "being the unbiassed sentiments of my heart, shall, upon no proper occasion, want the support of my open avowal; and I think it strange you should doubt me so far."

"I doubt thee not, my young friend," said Bridgenorth; "and I trust to see thy name rank high amongst those by whom the prey shall be rent from the mighty. At present, thy prejudices occupy thy mind like the strong keeper of the house mentioned in Scripture. But there shall come a stronger than he, and make forcible entry, displaying on the battlements that sign of faith in which alone there is found salvation.—Watch, hope, and pray, that the hour may come."

There was a pause in the conversation, which was first broken by Peveril. "You have spoken to me in riddles, Major Bridgenorth; and I have asked you for no explanation. Listen to a caution on my part, given with the most sincere good will. Hear a hint of mine, and believe it, though it is darkly expressed. You are here—at least are believed to be here—on an errand dangerous to the Lord of the Island. That danger will be retorted on yourself, if you make Man long your place of residence. Be warned, and depart in time."

"And leave my daughter to the guardianship of Julian Peveril? Runs not your counsel so, young man?" answered Bridgenorth. "Trust my safety, Julian, to my own prudence. I have been accustomed to guide myself through worse dangers than now environ me. But I thank you for your caution, which I am willing to believe was at least partly disinterested."

"We do not, then, part in anger?" said Peveril."

"Not in anger, my son," said Bridgenorth, "but in love and strong affection. For my

daughter, thou must forbear every thought of seeing her, save through me. I accept not thy suit, neither do I reject it; only this I intimate to you, that he who would be my son, must first shew himself the true and loving child of his oppressed and deluded country. Farewell; do not answer me now, thou art yet in the gall of bitterness, and it may be that strife (which I desire not) should fall between us. Thou shalt hear of me sooner than thou thinkest for."

He shook Peveril heartily by the hand, and again bid him farewell, leaving him under the confused and mingled impression of pleasure, doubt, and wonder. Not a little surprised to find himself so far in the good graces of Alice's father, that his suit was even favoured with a sort of negative encouragement, he could not help suspecting, as well from the language of the daughter as of the father, that Bridgenorth was desirous, as the price of his favour, he should adopt some line of conduct inconsistent with the principles in which he had been educated.

"You need not fear, Alice," he said in his heart; "not even your hand would I purchase

by aught which resembled unworthy or truckling compliance with tenets which my heart disowns; and well I know, were I mean enough to do so, even the authority of thy father were insufficient to compel thee to the ratification of so mean a bargain. But let me hope better things. Bridgenorth, though strong-minded and sagacious, is haunted by the fears of Popery, which are the bugbears of his sect. My residence in the family of the Countess of Derby is more than enough to inspire him with suspicions of my faith, from which, thank Heaven, I can vindicate myself with truth and good conscience."

So thinking, he again adjusted the girths of his palfrey, replaced the bit which he had slipped out of its mouth, that it might feed at liberty, and mounting, pursued his way back to the Castle of Holm-Peel, where he could not help fearing that something extraordinary might have happened in his absence.

But the old pile soon rose before him, serene, and sternly still, amid the sleeping ocean. The banner, which indicated that the Lord of Man

held residence within its ruinous precincts, hung motionless by the ensign-staff. The centinels walked to and fro on their posts, and hummed or whistled their Manx airs. Leaving his faithful companion, Fairy, in the village as before, Julian entered the Castle, and found all within in the same state of quietness and good order which external appearances had announced.

CHAPTER VI.

Now rede me, rede me, brother dear,
  Throughout merry England,
Where will I find a messenger,
  Betwixt us two to send.

Ballad of King Estmere.

JULIAN's first rencounter, after re-entering the Castle, was with its young Lord, who received him with his usual kindness and lightness of humour.

"Thrice welcome, Sir Knight of Dames," said the Earl; "here you rove gallantly, and at free will, through our dominions, fulfilling of appointments, and achieving amorous adventures; while we are condemned to sit in our royal halls, as dull and as immoveable as if our Majesty was carved on the stern of some Manx smuggling dogger, and christened the King Arthur of Ramsay."

"Nay, in that case you would take the sea," said Julian, "and so enjoy travel and adventure enough."

"Oh, but suppose me wind-bound, or detained in harbour by a revenue pink, or ashore, if you like it, and lying high and dry upon the sand. Imagine the royal image in the dullest of all predicaments, and you have not equalled mine."

"I am happy to hear, at least, that you have had no disagreeable employment," said Julian; "the morning's alarm has blown over, I suppose?"

"In faith it has, Julian; and our close inquiries cannot find any cause for the apprehended insurrection. That Bridgenorth is in the island seems certain; but private affairs of consequence are alleged as the cause of his visit; and I am not desirous to have him arrested unless I could prove some mal-practices against him and his companions. In fact, it would seem we had taken the alarm too soon. My mother speaks of consulting you on the subject, Julian; and I will not anticipate her solemn communication.

It will be partly apologetical, I suppose; for we begin to think our retreat rather unroyal, and that, like the wicked, we have fled when no man pursued. This idea afflicts my mother, who, as a Queen-Dowager, a Queen-Regent, a heroine, and a woman in general, would be extremely mortified to think that her precipitate retreat hither had exposed her to the ridicule of the islanders; and she is disconcerted, and out of humour, accordingly. In the meanwhile, my sole amusement has been the grimaces and fantastic gestures of that ape Fenella, who is more out of humour, and more absurd, in consequence, than you ever saw her. Morris says, it is because you pushed her down stairs, Julian—how is that?"

"Nay, Morris has misreported me," answered Julian; "I did but lift her *up* stairs to be rid of her importunity; for she chose, in her way, to contest my going abroad in such an obstinate manner, that I had no other mode of getting rid of her."

"She must have supposed your departure, at a moment so critical, was dangerous to the state of our garrison," answered the Earl; "it shews

how dearly she esteems my mother's safety, and how highly she rates your prowess.—But, thank Heaven, there sounds the dinner-bell. I would the philosophers, who find a sin and waste of time in good cheer, could devise us any pastime half so agreeable."

The meal which the young Earl had thus longed for, as a means of ridding him for a space of the time which hung heavy on his hands, was soon over; as soon, at least, as the habitual and stately formality of the Countess's household permitted. She herself, accompanied by her gentlewomen and attendants, retired early after the tables were drawn; and the young gentlemen were left to their own company. Wine had, for the moment, no charms for either; for the Earl was out of spirits from ennui and impatience of his monotonous and solitary course of life; and the events of the day had given Peveril too much matter for reflection to permit his starting amusing or interesting topics of conversation. After having passed the flask in silence betwixt them one or twice, they withdrew each

into a separate embrazure of the windows of the dining apartment, which, such was the extreme thickness of the wall, were deep enough to afford a solitary recess, separated, as it were, from the chamber itself. In one of these sate the Earl of Derby, busied in looking over some of the new publications which had been forwarded from London; and at intervals confessing how little power or interest these had for him, by yawning fearfully as he looked out on the solitary expanse of waters, which, save for the flight of a flock of sea-gulls, or of a solitary cormorant, offered so little of variety to engage his attention.

Peveril, on his part, held a pamphlet also in his hand, without giving, or affecting to give it, even his occasional attention. His whole soul turned upon the interview which he had had that day with Alice Bridgenorth, and with her father; while he in vain endeavoured to form any hypothesis which could explain to him why the daughter, to whom he had no reason to think himself indifferent, should have been so

suddenly desirous of their eternal separation; while her father, whose opposition he so much dreaded, seemed to be at least tolerant of his addresses. He could only suppose, in explanation, that Major Bridgenorth had some plan in prospect, which it was in his own power to further or to impede; while, from the demeanour, and indeed the language, of Alice, he had but too much reason to apprehend that her father's favour could only be conciliated by something, on his own part, approaching to dereliction of principle. But by no conjecture which he could form, could he make the least guess concerning the nature of that compliance, of which Bridgenorth seemed desirous. He could not imagine, notwithstanding Alice had spoken of treachery, that her father would dare to propose to him uniting in any plan by which the safety of the Countess, or the security of her little kingdom of Man, was to be endangered. This carried such indelible disgrace in the front, that he could not suppose the scheme proposed to him by any who was not prepared to defend with his sword, upon the spot, a flagrant insult offered to his

honour. And such a proceeding was totally inconsistent with the conduct of Major Bridgenorth in every other respect; besides his being too calm and cold-blooded to permit of his putting a mortal affront upon the son of his old neighbour, to whose mother he confessed so much of obligation.

While Peveril in vain endeavoured to extract something like a probable theory out of the hints thrown out by the father and by the daughter—not without the additional and lover-like labour of endeavouring to reconcile his passion to his honour and conscience—he felt something gently pull him by the cloak. He unclasped his arms, which, in meditation, had been folded on his bosom; and withdrawing his eyes from the vacant prospect of sea-coast and sea which they perused, without much consciousness upon what they rested, he beheld beside him the little dumb maiden, the elfin Fenella. She was seated on a low cushion or stool, with which she had nestled close to Peveril's side, and had remained there for a short space of time, expecting, no doubt, he would become conscious of

her presence; until, tired of remaining unnoticed, she at length solicited his attention in the manner which we have described. Startled out of his reverie by this intimation of her presence, he looked down, and could not, without interest, behold this singular and helpless being.

Her hair was unloosened, and streamed over her shoulders in such length, that much of it lay upon the ground, and in such quantity, that it formed a dark veil, or shadow, not only around her face, but over her whole slender and minute form. From the profusion of her tresses looked forth her small and dark, but well-formed features, together with the large and brilliant black eyes; and her whole countenance was composed into the imploring look of one who is dubious of the reception she is about to meet with from a valued friend, while she confesses a fault, pleads an apology, or solicits a reconciliation. In short, the whole face was so much alive with expression, that Julian, though her aspect was so familiar to him, could hardly persuade himself but what her countenance was entirely new. The wild, fantastic, elvish vivacity of the fea-

tures, seemed totally vanished, and had given place to a sorrowful, tender, and pathetic cast of countenance, aided by the expression of the large dark eyes, which, as they were turned up towards Julian, glistened with moisture, that, nevertheless, did not overflow the eyelids.

Conceiving that her unwonted manner arose from a recollection of the dispute which had taken place betwixt them this morning, Peveril was anxious to restore the little maiden's gaiety, by making her sensible that there dwelt on his mind no unpleasing recollection of their quarrel. He smiled kindly, and shook her hand in one of his; while, with the familiarity of one who had known her from childhood, he stroked down her long dark tresses with the other. She stooped her head, as if ashamed, and, at the same time, gratified with his caresses—and he was thus induced to continue them, until, under the veil of her rich and abundant locks he suddenly felt his other hand, which she still held fast in hers, slightly touched with her lips, and, at the same time, moistened with a tear.

At once, and for the first time in his life, the

danger of being misinterpreted in his familiarity with a creature to whom the usual modes of explanation were a blank, occurred to Julian's mind; and, hastily withdrawing his hand, and changing his posture, he asked of her, by a sign which custom had rendered familiar, whether she brought any message to him from the Countess. In an instant Fenella's whole deportment was changed. She started up, and arranged herself in her seat with the rapidity of lightning; and, at the same moment, with one turn of her hand, braided her length of locks into a natural head-dress of the most beautiful kind. There was, indeed, when she looked up, a blush still visible on her dark features; but their melancholy and languid expression had given place to that of wild and unsettled vivacity, which was most common to them. Her eyes glanced with more than their wonted fire, and her glances were more piercingly wild and unsettled than usual. To Julian's inquiry, she answered, by laying her hand on her heart—a motion by which she always indicated the Countess—and rising, and

taking the direction of her apartment, she made a sign to Julian to follow her.

The distance was not great betwixt the dining apartment and that to which Peveril now followed his mute guide; yet, in going thither, he had time enough to suffer cruelly from the sudden suspicion that this unhappy girl had misinterpreted the uniform kindness with which he had treated her, and hence come to regard him with feelings more tender than those which belong to friendship. The misery which such a passion was like to occasion to a creature in her helpless situation, and actuated by such lively feelings, was great enough to make him refuse credit to the suspicion which pressed itself upon his mind; while, at the same time, he formed the internal resolution so to conduct himself towards Fenella, as to check such misplaced sentiments, if indeed she unhappily entertained them towards him.

When they reached the Countess's apartment, they found her with writing implements, and many sealed letters, before her. She received Julian with her usual kindness; and having caused him to be seated, beckoned to the mute

to resume her needle. In an instant Fenella was seated at an embroidering-frame; where, but for the movement of her dexterous fingers, she might have seemed a statue, so little did she move from her work, either head or eye. As her infirmity rendered her presence no bar to the most confidential conversation, the Countess proceeded to address Peveril as if they had been literally alone together. "Julian," she said, "I am not now about to complain to you of the sentiments and conduct of Derby. He is your friend —he is my son. He has kindness of heart, and vivacity of talent; and yet——"

"Dearest lady," said Peveril, "why will you distress yourself with fixing your eye on deficiencies which arise rather from a change of times and manners, than any degeneracy of my noble friend? Let him be once engaged in his duty, whether in peace or war, and let me pay the penalty if he acquits not himself becoming his high station."

"Ay," replied the Countess; "but when will the call of duty prove superior to that of the

most idle or trivial indulgence which can serve to drive over the lazy hour? His father was of another mould; and how often was it my lot to entreat that he would spare, from the rigid discharge of those duties which his high station imposed, the relaxation necessary to recruit his health and his spirits."

"Still, my dearest lady," said Peveril, "you must allow that the duties to which the times summoned your late honoured lord were of a more stirring, as well as a more peremptory cast, than those which await your son."

"I know not that," said the Countess. "The wheel appears to be again revolving; and the present period is not unlikely to bring back such scenes as my younger years witnessed.—Well, be it so; they will not find Charlotte de la Tremouille broken in spirit, though depressed by years. It was even on this subject I would speak with you, my young friend. Since our first early acquaintance—when I saw your gallant behaviour as I issued forth to your childish eye, like an apparition, from my place of concealment in

your father's castle—it has pleased me to think you a true son of Stanley and Peveril. I trust your nurture in this family has been ever suited to the esteem in which I hold you.—Nay, I desire no thanks.—I have to require of you, in return, a piece of service, not perhaps entirely safe to yourself, but which, as times are circumstanced, no person is so well able to render to my house."

"You have been ever my good and noble lady," answered Peveril, "as well as my kind, and I may say maternal, protectress. You have a right to command the blood of Stanley in the veins of every one—You have a thousand rights to command it in mine."

"My advices from England," said the Countess, "resemble more the dreams of a sick man, than the regular information which I might have expected from such correspondents as mine;—their expressions are like those of men who walk in their sleep, and speak by snatches of what passes in their dreams. It is said, a plot, real or fictitious, has been detected amongst the Catholics, which has spread far wider, and more un-

controllable terror, than that of the fifth of November. Its outlines seem utterly incredible, and are only supported by the evidence of wretches, the meanest and most worthless in the creation; yet it is received by the credulous people of England with the most undoubting credulity."

"This is a singular delusion, to rise without some real ground," answered Julian.

"I am no bigot, cousin, though a Catholic," replied the Countess. "I have long feared that the well-meant zeal of our priests for increasing converts, would draw on them the suspicion of the English nation. These efforts have been renewed with double energy since the Duke of York conformed to the Catholic faith; and the same event has doubled the hate and jealousy of the Protestants. So far, I fear, there may be just cause for suspicion, that the Duke is a better Catholic than an Englishman, and that bigotry has involved him, as avarice, or the needy greed of a prodigal, has engaged his brother, in relations with France, whereof England may have too much reason to complain. But the gross, thick, and palpable falsehoods of conspiracy and murder,

blood and fire—the imaginary armies—the intended massacres—form a collection of falsehoods, that one would have thought indigestible, even by the coarse appetite of the vulgar for the marvellous and horrible; but which are, nevertheless, received as truth by both Houses of Parliament, and questioned by no one who is desirous to escape the odious appellation of friend to the bloody Papists, and favourer of their infernal schemes of cruelty."

"But what say those who are most likely to be affected by these wild reports?" said Julian. "What say the English Catholics themselves?—a numerous and wealthy body, comprizing so many noble names?"

"Their hearts are dead within them," said the Countess. "They are like sheep penned up in the shambles, that the butcher may take his choice among them. In the obscure and brief communications which I have had by a secure hand, they do but anticipate their own utter ruin, and ours—so general is the depression, so universal the despair."

"But the King," said Peveril,—"the King and the Protestant royalists—what say they to this growing tempest?"

"Charles," replied the Countess, "with his usual selfish prudence, truckles to the storm; and will let cord and axe do their work on the most innocent men in his dominions, rather than lose an hour of pleasure in attempting their rescue. And, for the royalists, either they have caught the general delirium which has seized on Protestants in general, or they stand aloof and neutral, afraid to shew any interest in the unhappy Catholics, lest they be judged altogether such as themselves, and abettors of the fearful conspiracy in which they are alleged to be engaged. In fact, I cannot blame them. It is hard to expect that mere compassion for a persecuted sect—or, what is yet more rare, an abstract love of justice—should be powerful enough to engage men to expose themselves to the awakened fury of a whole people; for, in the present state of general agitation, whoever disbelieves the least tittle of the enormous improbabilities which have

been accumulated by these wretched informers, is instantly hunted down, as one who would smother the discovery of the plot. It is indeed an awful tempest; and remote as we lie from its sphere, we must expect soon to feel its effects."

"Lord Derby already told me something of this," said Julian; "and that there were agents in this island whose object was to excite insurrection."

"Yes," answered the Countess, and her eye flashed fire as she spoke; "and had my advice been listened to, they had been apprehended in the very fact; and so dealt with, as to be a warning to all others how they sought this independent principality on such an errand. But my son, who is generally so culpably negligent of his own affairs, was pleased to assume the management of them upon this crisis."

"I am happy to learn, madam," answered Peveril, "that the measures of precaution which my kinsman has adopted, have had the complete effect of disconcerting the conspiracy."

"For the present, Julian; but they should have been such as would have made the boldest

tremble, to think of such infringement of our rights in future. But Derby's present plan is fraught with greater danger; and yet there is something in it of gallantry, which has my sympathy."

"What is it, madam?" enquired Julian, anxiously; "and in what can I aid it, or avert its dangers?"

"He purposes," said the Countess, "instantly to set forth for London. He is, he says, not merely the feudal chief of a small island, but one of the noble Peers of England, who must not remain in the security of an obscure and distant castle, when his name, or that of his mother, is slandered before his Prince and people. He will take his place, he says, in the House of Lords, and publicly demand justice for the insult thrown on his house, by perjured and interested witnesses."

"It is a generous resolution, and worthy of my friend," said Julian Peveril. "I will go with him, and share his fate, be it what it may."

"Alas, foolish boy!" answered the Countess, "as well may you ask a hungry lion to feel com-

passion, as a prejudiced and furious people to do justice. They are like the madman at the height of frenzy, who murders without compunction his best and dearest friend; and only wonders and wails over his own cruelty, when he is recovered from his delirium."

"Pardon me, dearest lady," said Julian, "this cannot be. The noble and generous people of England cannot be thus strangely misled. Whatever prepossessions may be current among the more vulgar, the Houses of Legislature cannot be deeply infected by them—they will remember their own dignity."

"Alas, cousin," answered the Countess, "when did Englishmen, even of the highest degree, remember any thing, when hurried away by the violence of party feeling? Even those who have too much sense to believe in the incredible fictions which gull the multitude, will beware how they expose them, if their own political party can gain a momentary advantage by their being accredited. It is amongst such, too, that your kinsman has found friends and associates. Neglecting the

old friends of his house, as too grave and formal companions for the humour of the times, his intercourse has been with the versatile Shaftesbury—the mercurial Buckingham—men who would not hesitate to sacrifice to the popular Moloch of the day, whatsoever, or whomsoever—whose ruin could propitiate the deity.—Forgive a mother's tears, kinsman; but I see the scaffold at Bolton again erected. If Derby goes to London while these blood-hounds are in full cry, obnoxious as he is, and as I have made him by my religious faith, and my conduct in this island, he dies his father's death. And yet upon what other course to resolve!——"

"Let me go to London, madam," said Peveril, much moved by the distress of his patroness; "your ladyship was wont to rely something on my judgment. I will act for the best—will communicate with those whom you point out to me, and only with them; and I trust soon to send you information that this delusion, however strong it may now be, is in the course of passing away; at worst, I can apprize you of the danger, should it menace the Earl or yourself;

and may be able also to point out the means by which it may be eluded."

The Countess listened with a countenance in which the anxiety of maternal affection, which prompted her to embrace Peveril's generous offer, struggled with her native disinterested and generous disposition. "Think what you ask of me, Julian," she replied, with a sigh. "Would you have me expose the life of my friend's son to those perils to which I refuse my own?—No, never."

"Nay, but, madam," replied Julian, "I do not run the same risk—my person is not known in London—my situation, though not obscure in my own country, is too little known to be noticed in that huge assemblage of all that is noble and wealthy. No whisper, I presume, however indirect, has connected my name with the alleged conspiracy. I am a Protestant, above all; and can be accused of no intercourse, direct or indirect, with the Church of Rome. My connections also lie amongst those, who, if they do not, or cannot, befriend me, cannot at least be dangerous to me.

In a word, I run no danger, where the Earl might incur great peril."

"Alas!" said the Countess of Derby, "all this generous reasoning may be true; but it could only be listened to by a widowed mother. Selfish as I am, I cannot but reflect that my kinswoman has, in all events, the support of an affectionate husband—such is the interested reasoning to which we are not ashamed to subject our better feelings."

"Do not call it so, madam," answered Peveril; "think of me but as the younger brother of my kinsman. You have ever done by me the duties of a mother; and have a right to my filial service, were it at a risk ten times greater than a journey to London, to inquire into the temper of the times. I will instantly go, and announce my departure to the Earl."

"Stay, Julian," said the Countess; "if you must make this journey in our behalf,—and, alas, I have not generosity enough to refuse your noble proffer,—you must go alone, and without communication with Derby. I know him well;

his lightness of mind is free from selfish baseness; and for the world, would he not suffer you to leave Man without his company. And if he went with you, your noble and disinterested kindness would be of no avail—you would but share his ruin, as the swimmer who attempts to save a drowning man is involved in his fate, if he permit the sufferer to grapple with him."

"It shall be as you please, madam," said Peveril. "I am ready to depart upon half an hour's notice."

"This night, then," said the Countess, after a moment's pause—"this night I will arrange the most secret means of carrying your generous project into effect; for I would not excite that prejudice against you, which will instantly arise, were it known you had so lately left this island, and its Popish lady. You will do well, perhaps, to use a feigned name in London."

"Pardon me, madam," said Julian; "I will do nothing that can draw on me unnecessary attention; but to bear a feigned name, or affect any disguise beyond living with extreme privacy, would, I think, be unwise as well as unworthy;

and what, if challenged, I might find some difficulty in assigning a reason for, consistent with perfect fairness of intentions."

"I believe you are right," answered the Countess, after a moment's consideration; and then added, "You propose, doubtless, to pass through Derbyshire, and visit Martindale Castle?"

"I should wish it, madam, certainly," replied Peveril, "did time permit, and circumstances render it advisable."

"Of that," said the Countess, "you must yourself judge. Dispatch is, doubtless, desirable; on the other hand, arriving from your own family-seat, you will be less an object of doubt and suspicion, than if you posted up from hence, without even visiting your parents. You must be guided in this,—in all,—by your own prudence. Go, my dearest son; for to me you should be dear as a son—go, and prepare for your journey. I will get ready some dispatches, and a supply of money—Nay, do not object. Am I not your mother; and are you not discharging a son's duty? Dispute not my right of defray-

ing your expenses. Nor is this all; for, as I must trust your zeal and prudence to act in our behalf when occasion shall demand, I will furnish you with effectual recommendations to our friends and kindred, entreating and enjoining them to render whatever aid you may require, either for your own protection, or the advancement of what you may propose in our favour."

Peveril made no farther opposition to an arrangement, which in truth the moderate state of his own finances rendered almost indispensable, unless with his father's assistance; and the Countess put into his hand bills of exchange, to the amount of two hundred pounds, upon a merchant in the city. She then dismissed Julian for the space of an hour; after which, she said, she must again require his presence.

The preparations for his journey were not of a nature to divert the thoughts which speedily pressed on him. He found that half an hour's conversation had once more completely changed his immediate prospects and plans for the future. He had offered to the Countess of Derby a ser-

vice, which her uniform kindness had well deserved at his hand; but, by her accepting it, he was upon the point of being separated from Alice Bridgenorth, at a time when she was become dearer to him than ever, by her avowal of mutual passion. Her image rose before him, such as he had that day pressed her to his bosom—her voice was in his ear, and seemed to ask whether he could desert her in the crisis which every thing seemed to announce as impending. But Julian Peveril, his youth considered, was strict in judging his duty, and severely resolved in executing it. He trusted not his imagination to pursue the vision which presented itself; but resolutely seizing his pen, wrote to Alice the following letter, explaining his situation, as far as justice to the Countess permitted him to do so:—

"I leave you, dearest Alice," thus ran the letter, "I leave you; and though, in doing so, I but obey the command you have laid on me, yet I can claim little merit for my compliance, since, without additional and most forcible rea-

sons in aid of your orders, I fear I should have been unable to comply with them. But family affairs of importance compel me to absent myself from this island, for, I fear, more than one week. My thoughts, hopes, and wishes, will be on the moment that will restore me to the Black-Fort, and its lovely valley. Let me hope that yours will sometimes rest on the lonely exile, whom nothing could render such, but the command of honour and duty. Do not fear that I mean to involve you in a private correspondence, and let not your father fear it. I could not love you so much, but for the openness and candour of your nature; and I would not that you concealed from Major Bridgenorth one syllable of what I now avow. Respecting other matters, he himself cannot desire the welfare of our common country with more zeal than I do. Differences may occur concerning the mode in which that is to be obtained; but, in the principle, I am convinced there can be only one mind between us; nor can I refuse to listen to his experience and wisdom, even where they may ultimately fail to convince me. Farewell—Alice, farewell! Much

might be added to that melancholy word, but nothing that could express the bitterness with which it is written. Yet I could transcribe it again and again, rather than conclude the last communication which I can have with you for some time. My sole comfort is, that my stay will scarce be so long as to permit you to forget one who never can forget you."

He held the paper in his hand for a minute after he had folded, but before he had sealed it, while he hurriedly debated in his own mind whether he had not expressed himself towards Major Bridgenorth in so conciliating a manner as might excite hopes of proselytism, which his conscience told him he could not realize with honour. Yet, on the other hand, he had no right, from what Bridgenorth had said, to conclude that their principles were diametrically irreconcileable; for though the son of a high Cavalier, and educated in the family of the Countess of Derby, he was himself, upon principle, an enemy of prerogative, and a friend to the liberty of the subject. And with such considerations he silenced all internal objections on the point of ho-

nour; although his conscience secretly whispered that these conciliatory expressions towards the father were chiefly dictated by the fear, that, during his absence, Major Bridgenorth might be tempted to change the residence of his daughter, and perhaps to convey her altogether out of his reach.

Having sealed his letter, Julian called his servant, and directed him to carry it, under cover of one addressed to Mrs Debbitch, to a house in the town of Rushen, where packets and messages intended for the family at Black-Fort were usually deposited; and for that purpose to take horse immediately. He thus got rid of an attendant, who might have been in some degree a spy on his motions. He then exchanged the dress he usually wore, for one more suited to travelling; and having put a change or two of linen into a small cloak-bag, selected as arms a strong double-edged sword and an excellent pair of pistols, which last he carefully loaded with double bullets. Thus appointed, and with twenty pieces in his purse, and the bills we have men-

tioned secured in a private pocket-book, he was in readiness to depart so soon as he should receive the Countess's commands.

The buoyant spirit of youth and hope, which had, for a moment, been chilled by the painful and dubious circumstances in which he was placed, as well as the deprivation which he was about to undergo, now revived in full vigour. Fancy, turning from more painful anticipations, suggested to him that he was now entering upon life, at a crisis when resolution and talents were almost certain to make the fortune of their possessor. How could he make a more honourable entry on the bustling scene, than sent by, and acting in behalf of, one of the noblest houses in England; and should he perform what his charge might render incumbent with the resolution and the prudence necessary to secure success, how many occurrences might take place to render his mediation necessary to Bridgenorth; and thus enable him, on the most equal and honourable terms, to establish a claim to his gratitude and to his daughter's hand.

Whilst he was dwelling on such pleasing, though imaginary prospects, he could not help exclaiming aloud—" Yes, Alice, I will win thee nobly!" The words had scarce escaped his lips when he heard at the door of his apartment, which the servant had left ajar, a sound like a deep sigh, which was instantly succeeded by a gentle tap—" Come in," replied Julian, somewhat ashamed of his exclamation, and not a little afraid that it had been caught up by some eves-dropper.—" Come in," he again repeated; but his command was not obeyed; on the contrary, the knock was repeated somewhat louder. He opened the door, and Fenella stood before him.

With eyes that seemed red with recent tears, and with a look of the deepest dejection, the little mute, first touching her bosom, and beckoning with her finger, made to him the usual sign that the Countess desired to see him,—then turned, as if to usher him to her apartment. As he followed her through the long gloomy vaulted passages which afforded communication betwixt the various apartments of the castle, he could

not but observe that her usual light trip was exchanged for a tardy and mournful step, which she accompanied with low inarticulate moaning, (which she was probably the less able to suppress, because she could not judge how far it was audible,) and also with wringing of the hands, and other marks of extreme affliction.

At this moment a thought came across Peveril's mind, which, in spite of his better reason, made him shudder involuntarily. As a Peaksman, and a long resident in the Isle of Man, he was well acquainted with many a superstitious legend, and particularly with a belief, which attached to the powerful family of the Stanleys, for their peculiar demon, a Ban-shie, or female spirit, who was wont to shriek, "foreboding evil times;" and who was generally seen weeping and bemoaning herself before the death of any person of distinction belonging to the family. For an instant, Julian could scarce divest himself of the belief that the wailing, gibbering form which glided before him, with a lamp in her hand, was the genius of his mother's race, come to announce to him his predestined doom. It instantly oc-

curred to him, as an analogous reflection, that if the suspicion which had crossed his mind concerning Fenella was a just one, her ill-fated attachment to him, like that of the prophetic spirit to his family, could bode nothing but disaster, and lamentation, and woe.

CHAPTER VII.

Now, hoist the anchor, mates—and let the sails
Give their broad bosom to the buxom wind,
Like lass that wooes a lover.

Anonymous.

The presence of the Countess dispelled the superstitious feeling, which, for an instant, had encroached on Julian's imagination, and compelled him to give attention to the matters of ordinary life. "Here are your credentials," she said, giving him a small packet carefully put up in a seal-skin cover; "you had better not open them till you come to London. You must not be surprised to find that there are one or two addressed to men of my own persuasion. These, for all our sakes, you will observe caution in delivering."

"I go your messenger, madam," said Peveril; "and whatever you desire me to charge

myself with, of that I undertake the care. Yet allow me to doubt whether an intercourse with Catholics will at this moment forward the purposes of my mission."

"You have caught the general suspicion of this wicked sect already," said the Countess, smiling, "and are the fitter to go amongst Englishmen in their present mood. But, my cautious friend, these letters are so addressed, and the persons to whom they are addressed so disguised, that you will run no danger in conversing with them. Without their aid, indeed, you will not be able to obtain the accurate information you go to seek. None can tell so exactly how the wind sets, as the pilot whose vessel is exposed to the storm. Besides, though you Protestants deny our priesthood the harmlessness of the dove, you are ready enough to allow us a full share of the wisdom of the serpent;—in plain terms, their means of information are extensive, and they are not deficient in the power of applying it. I therefore wish you to have the benefit of their intelligence and advice, if possible."

"Whatever you impose on me as a part of my duty, madam, rely on its being discharged punctually," answered Peveril. "And now, as there is little use in deferring execution of a purpose when once fixed, let me know your ladyship's wishes concerning my departure."

"It must be sudden and secret," said the Countess; "the island is full of spies; and I would not wish that any of them should have notice that an envoy of mine was about to leave Man for London.—Can you be ready to go on board to-morrow?"

"To-night—this instant if you will," said Julian,—"my little preparations are complete."

"Be ready, then, in your chamber, at two hours after midnight. I will send one to summon you, for our secret must be communicated, for the present, to as few as possible. A foreign sloop is engaged to carry you over; then make the best of your way to London, by Martindale Castle or otherwise, as you find most advisable. When it is necessary to announce your absence, I will say you are gone to see your parents. But

stay—your journey will be on horseback, of course, from Whitehaven. You have bills of exchange, it is true; but are you provided with ready money to furnish yourself with a good horse?"

"I am sufficiently rich, madam," answered Julian; "and good nags are plenty in Cumberland. There are those among them who know how to come by them good and cheap."

"Trust not to that," said the Countess. "Here is what will purchase for you the best horse on the Borders.—Can you be simple enough to refuse it?" she added, as she pressed on him a heavy purse, which he saw himself obliged to accept.

"A good horse, Julian," said the Countess, "and a good sword, next to a good heart and head, are the accomplishments of a cavalier."

"I kiss your hands, then, madam," said Peveril, "and humbly beg you to believe, that whatever may fail in my present undertaking, my purpose to serve you, my noble kinswoman and benefactress, can at least never swerve or faulter."

"I know it, my son, I know it; and may God forgive me if my anxiety for your friend has sent you on dangers which should have been his. Go—go—May saints and angels bless you. Fenella shall acquaint him that you sup in your own apartment. So indeed will I; for to-night I should be unable to face my son's looks. Little will he thank me for sending you on his errand; and there will be many to ask whether it was like the Lady of Latham to thrust her friend's son on the danger which should have been found by her own. But O, Julian, I am now a forlorn widow, whom sorrow has made selfish."

"Tush, madam," answered Peveril; "it is more unlike the Lady of Latham to anticipate dangers which may not exist at all, and to which, if they do indeed occur, I am less obnoxious than my noble kinsman. Farewell! All blessings attend you, madam. Commend me to Derby, and make him my excuses. I will expect a summons at two hours after midnight."

They took an affectionate leave of each other; the more affectionate, indeed, on the part of the

Countess, that she could not entirely reconcile her generous mind to exposing Peveril to danger on her son's behalf; and Julian betook himself to his solitary apartment.

His servant soon afterwards brought him wine and refreshments; to which, notwithstanding the various matters he had to occupy his mind, he contrived to do reasonable justice. But when this needful occupation was finished, his thoughts began to stream in upon him like a troubled tide—recalling at once the past, and anticipating the future. It was in vain that he wrapped himself in his riding cloak, and, lying down on his bed, endeavoured to compose himself to sleep. The uncertainty of the prospect before him—the doubt how Bridgenorth might dispose of his daughter during his absence—the fear that the Major himself might fall into the power of the vindictive Countess, besides a numerous train of vague and half-formed apprehensions, agitated his blood, and rendered slumber impossible. Alternately to recline in the old oaken easy-chair, and listen to the dashing of the waves under the windows,

mingled, as the sound was, with the scream of the sea-birds; or to traverse the apartment with long and slow steps, pausing occasionally to look out on the sea, slumbering under the influence of a full moon, which tipped each wave with silver—such were the only pastimes he could invent, until midnight had past for one hour, when the next was wasted in anxious expectation of the summons of departure.

At length it arrived—a tap at his door was followed by a low murmur, which made him suspect that the Countess had again employed her mute attendant as the most secure minister of her pleasure on this occasion. He felt something like impropriety in this selection; and it was with a feeling of impatience alien to the natural generosity of his temper, that, when he opened the door, he beheld the dumb maiden standing before him. The lamp which he held in his hand shewed his features distinctly, and probably made Fenella aware of the expression which animated them. She cast her large dark eyes mournfully on the ground; and, without

again looking him in the face, made him a signal to follow her. He delayed no longer than was necessary to secure his pistols in his belt, wrap his cloak closer around him, and take his small portmantle under his arm. Thus accoutred, he followed her out of the Keep, or inhabited part of the Castle, by a series of obscure passages leading to a postern gate, which she unlocked with a key, selected from a bundle which she carried at her girdle.

They now stood in the castle-yard, in the open moonlight, which glimmered white and ghastly on the variety of strange and ruinous objects to which we have formerly alluded, and which gave the scene rather the appearance of some ancient cemetery, than of the interior of a fortification. The round and elevated tower—the ancient mount, with its quadrangular sides facing the ruinous edifices which once boasted the name of Cathedral—seemed of yet more antique and anomalous form, when seen by the pale light which now displayed them. To one of those churches Fenella took the direct course, and was follow-

ed by Julian; although he at once divined, and was superstitious enough to dislike, the path which she was about to adopt. It was by a secret passage through this church, that in former times the guard-room of the garrison, situated at the lower and external defences, communicated with the Keep of the Castle; and through this passage were the keys of the Castle every night carried to the Governor's apartment, so soon as the gates were locked, and the watch set. The custom was given up in James the First's time, and the passage abandoned, on account of the well-known legend of the *Manthe Dog*—a fiend, or demon, in the shape of a large, shaggy, black mastiff, by which the church was haunted. It was devoutly believed, that in former times this spectre became so familiar with mankind, as to appear almost nightly in the guard-room, issuing from the passage which we have mentioned at night, and retiring to it at day-break. The soldiers became partly familiarized to its presence; yet not so much so as to use any licence of language while the apparition was visible;

until one fellow, rendered daring by intoxication, swore he would know whether it was dog or devil, and, with his drawn sword, followed the spectre when it retreated by the usual passage. The man returned in a few minutes, sobered by terror, his mouth gaping, and his hair standing on end; but, unhappily for the lovers of the marvellous, altogether unable to disclose the horrors which he had seen. Under the evil repute arising from this tale of wonder, the guard-room was abandoned, and a new one constructed. In like manner, the guards after that period held another and more circuitous communication with the Governor or Seneschal of the Castle; and that which lay through the ruinous church was entirely abandoned.

In defiance of the legendary terrors which tradition had attached to the original communication, Fenella, followed by Peveril, now boldly traversed the ruinous vaults through which it lay—sometimes only guided over heaps of ruins by the precarious light of the lamp borne by the dumb maiden—sometimes having the advantage

of a gleam of moonlight, darting into the dreary abyss through the shafted windows, or through breaches made by time. As the path was by no means a straight one, Peveril could not but admire the intimate acquaintance with the mazes which his singular companion displayed, as well as the boldness with which she traversed them. He himself was not so utterly void of the prejudices of the times, but what he contemplated, with some apprehension, the possibility of their intruding on the lair of the phantom-hound, of whom he had heard so often; and in every remote sigh of the breeze among the ruins, he thought he heard him baying at the mortal footsteps which disturbed his gloomy realm. No such terrors, however, interrupted their journey; and in the course of a few minutes, they attained the deserted and now ruinous guard-house. The broken walls of the little edifice served to conceal them from the centinels, one of whom was keeping a drowsy watch at the lower gate of the Castle; whilst another, seated on the stone steps which communicated with the

parapet of the bounding and exterior wall, was slumbering, in full security, with his musket peacefully grounded by his side. Fenella made a sign to Peveril to move with silence and caution, and then shewed him, to his surprise, from the window of the deserted guard-room, a boat, for it was now high water, with four rowers, lurking under the cliff on which the Castle was built; and made him farther sensible, that he was to have access to it by a ladder of considerable height placed at the window of the ruin.

Julian was both displeased and alarmed by the security and carelessness of the centinels, who had suffered such preparations to be made without observation or alarm given; and he hesitated whether he should not call the officer of the guard, upbraid him with negligence, and shew him how easily Holm-Peel, in spite of its natural strength, and although reported impregnable, might be surprised by a few resolute men. Fenella seemed to guess his thoughts with that extreme acuteness of observation which her deprivations had occasioned her acquiring. She

laid one hand on his arm, and a finger of the other on her own lips, as if to enjoin forbearance; and Julian, knowing that she acted by the direct authority of the Countess, obeyed her accordingly; but with the internal resolution to lose no time in communicating his sentiments to the Earl, concerning the danger to which the Castle was exposed on this point.

In the meantime, he descended the ladder with some precaution, for the steps were unequal, broken, wet, and slippery; and having placed himself in the stern of the boat, made a signal to the men to push off, and turned to take farewell of his guide. To his utter astonishment, Fenella rather slid down, than descended regularly, the perilous ladder; and the boat being already pushed off, made a spring from the last step of it with incredible agility, and seated herself beside Peveril, ere he could express either remonstrance or surprise. He commanded the men once more to pull in to the precarious landing-place; and throwing into his countenance a part of the displeasure which he really felt, endeavoured to

make her comprehend the necessity of returning to her mistress. Fenella folded her arms, and looked at him with a haughty smile, which completely expressed the determination of her purpose. Peveril was extremely embarrassed; he was afraid of offending the Countess, and interfering with her plan, by giving alarm, which otherwise he was much tempted to have done. On Fenella, it was evident, no species of argument which he could employ was like to make the least impression; and the question remained, how, if she went on with him, he was to rid himself of so singular and inconvenient a companion, and provide, at the same time, sufficiently for her personal security.

The boatmen brought the matter to a decision; for, after laying on their oars for a minute, and whispering among themselves in Low Dutch or German, they began to pull stoutly, and were soon at some distance from the Castle. The possibility of the centinels sending a musket-ball, or even a cannon-shot, after them, was one of the contingencies which gave Peveril momentary anxiety;

but they left the fortress, as they must have approached it, unnoticed, or at least unchallenged—a carelessness on the part of the garrison, which, notwithstanding that the oars were muffled, and that the men spoke little, and in whispers, argued, in Peveril's opinion, great negligence on the part of the centinels. When they were a little way from the Castle, the men began to row briskly towards a small vessel which lay at some distance. Peveril had, in the meantime, leisure to remark, that the boatmen spoke to each other doubtfully, and bent anxious looks on Fenella, as if doubtful whether they had acted properly in bringing her off.

After about a quarter of an hour's rowing, they reached the little sloop, where Peveril was received by the skipper, or captain, on the quarter-deck, with offer of spirits or refreshment. A word or two among the seamen withdrew the captain from his hospitable cares, and he flew to the ship's side, apparently to prevent Fenella from entering the vessel. The men and he talked eagerly in Dutch, looking anxiously at Fenella

as they spoke together; and Peveril hoped the result would be, that the poor young woman should be sent ashore again. But she baffled whatever opposition could be opposed to her; and when the accommodation-ladder, as it is called, was withdrawn, snatched the end of a rope, and climbed on board with the dexterity of a sailor, leaving them no means of preventing her entrance, save by actual violence, to which apparently they did not chuse to have recourse. Once on deck, she took the captain by the sleeve, and led him to the head of the vessel, where they seemed to hold intercourse in a manner intelligible to both.

Peveril soon forgot the presence of the mute, as he began to muse upon his own situation, and the probability that he was separated for some considerable time from the object of his affections. "Constancy," he repeated to himself,—"Constancy." And, as if in coincidence with the theme of his reflections, he fixed his eyes on the polar star, which that night twinkled with more than ordinary brilliancy. Emblem of pure passion and

steady purpose—the thoughts which arose as he viewed its clear and unchanging light, were disinterested and noble. To seek his country's welfare, and secure the blessings of domestic peace—to discharge a bold and perilous duty to his friend and patron—to regard his passion for Alice Bridgenorth, as the load-star which was to guide him to noble deeds—were the resolutions which thronged upon his mind, and which exalted his spirits to that state of romantic melancholy, which perhaps is ill-exchanged even for feelings of joyful rapture.

He was recalled from these contemplations by something which nestled itself softly and closely to his side—a woman's sigh sounded so near him, as to disturb his reverie; and as he turned his head, he saw Fenella seated beside him, with her eyes fixed on the same star which had just occupied his own. His first emotion was that of displeasure; but it was impossible to persevere in it, towards a being so helpless in many respects, so interesting in others; whose large dark eyes were filled with dew, which glistened in the moon-

light; and the source of whose emotions seemed to be in a partiality which might well claim indulgence, at least from him, who was the object of it. At the same time, Julian resolved to seize the present opportunity, for such expostulation with Fenella on the strangeness of her conduct, as the poor maiden might be able to comprehend. He took her hand with great kindness, but at the same time with much gravity, pointed to the boat, and to the Castle, whose towers and extended walls were now scarce visible in the distance; and thus intimated to her the necessity of her return to Holm-Peel. She looked down, and shook her head, as if negativing his proposal with obstinate decision. Julian renewed his expostulation by look and gesture—pointed to his own heart, to intimate the Countess—and bent his brows, to shew the displeasure which she must entertain. To all which, the maiden only answered by her tears.

At length, as if driven to explanation by his continued remonstrances, she suddenly seized him by the arm, to arrest his attention—cast her eye hastily around, as if to see whether she was

watched by any one—then drew the other hand, edge ways, across her slender throat—pointed to the boat, and to the Castle, and nodded.

On this series of signs, Peveril could put no interpretation, excepting that he was menaced with some personal danger, from which Fenella seemed to conceive that her presence was a protection. Whatever was her meaning, her purpose seemed unalterably adopted; at least, it was plain he had no power to shake it. He must therefore wait till the end of their short voyage, to disembarrass himself of his companion; and, in the meanwhile, acting on the idea of her having harboured a misplaced attachment to him, he thought he should best consult her interest, and his own character, in keeping at as great a distance from her as circumstances admitted. With this purpose, he made the sign she used for going to sleep, by leaning his head on his palm; and having thus recommended to her to go to rest, he himself desired to be conducted to his birth.

The captain readily shewed him a hammock in the after-cabin, into which he threw himself, to

seek that repose which the exercise and agitation of the preceding day, as well as the lateness of the hour, made him now feel desirable. Sleep, deep and heavy, sunk down on him in a few minutes, but it did not endure long. In his sleep he was disturbed by female cries; and at length, as he thought, distinctly heard the voice of Alice Bridgenorth call on his name.

He awoke, and starting up to quit his bed, became sensible, from the motion of the vessel, and the swinging of the hammock, that his dream had deceived him. He was still startled by its extreme vivacity and liveliness. "Julian Peveril, help! Julian Peveril!" The sounds still rung in his ears—the accents were those of Alice—and he could scarce persuade himself that his imagination had deceived him. Could she be in the same vessel? The thought was not altogether inconsistent with her father's character, and the intrigues in which he was engaged; but, then, if so, to what peril was she exposed, that she invoked his name so loudly?

Determined to make instant inquiry, he jumped out of his hammock, half-dressed as he was, and stumbling about the little cabin, which was as

dark as pitch, at length, with considerable difficulty, reached the door. The door, however, he was altogether unable to open; and was obliged to call loudly to the watch upon deck. The skipper, or captain, as he was called, being the only person aboard who could speak English, answered to the summons, and replied to Peveril's demand, what noise that was?—that a boat was going off with the young woman—that she whimpered a little as she left the vessel—and "dat vaas all."

This explanation satisfied Julian, who thought it probable that some degree of violence might have been absolutely necessary to remove Fenella; and although he rejoiced not to have witnessed it, he could not feel sorry that such had been employed. Her pertinacious desire to continue on board, and the difficulty of freeing himself when he should come ashore from so singular a companion, had given him a good deal of anxiety on the preceding night, which he now saw removed by this bold stroke of the captain.

His dream was thus fully explained. Fancy had caught up the inarticulate and vehement cries

with which Fenella was wont to express resistance or displeasure—had coined them into language, and given them the accents of Alice Bridgenorth. Our imagination plays wilder tricks with us almost every night.

The captain now undid the door, and appeared with a lantern; without the aid of which, Peveril could scarce have regained his couch, where he now slumbered secure and sound, until day was far advanced, and the invitation of the captain called him up to breakfast.

CHAPTER VIII.

Now, what is this that haunts me like my shadow,
Frisking and mumming like an elf in moonlight?
BEN JONSON.

PEVERIL found the master of the vessel rather less rude than those in his station of life usually are, and received from him full satisfaction concerning the fate of Fenella, upon whom the captain bestowed a hearty curse, for obliging him to lay-to until he had sent his boat ashore, and had her back again.

"I hope," said Peveril, "no violence was necessary to reconcile her to go ashore? I trust she offered no foolish resistance?"

"Resist! mein Gott," said the captain, "she did resist like a troop of horse—she did cry, you might hear her at Whitehaven—she did go up

the rigging like a cat up a chimney; but dat vas ein trick of her old trade."

"What trade do you mean?" said Peveril.

"O," said the seaman, "I vas know more about her than you, Meinheer. I vas know that she was a little, very little girl, and prentice to one seiltanzer, when my lady yonder had the good luck to buy her."

"A seiltanzer," said Peveril; "what do you mean by that?"

"I mean a rope-danzer, a mountebank, a Hans pickel-harring. I vas know Adrian Brackel vell—he sell de powders dat empty men's stomach, and fill him's own purse. Not know Adrian Brackel, mein Gott! I have smoked many a pound of tabak with him."

Peveril now remembered that Fenella had been brought into the family when he and the young Earl were in England, and while the Countess was absent on an expedition to the continent. Where the Countess found her, she never communicated to the young men; but only intimated, that she had received her out of compassion, in order to relieve her from a situation of extreme distress.

He hinted so much to the communicative seaman, who replied, "that for distress he knew nochts on't; only, that Adrian Brackel beat her when she would not dance on the rope, and starved her when she did, to prevent her growth. The bargain between the Countess and the mountebank, he said, he had made himself; because the Countess had hired his brig upon her expedition to the continent. None else knew where she came from. The Countess had seen her on a public stage at Ostend—compassionated her helpless situation, and the severe treatment she received—and had employed him to purchase the poor creature from her master, and charged him with silence towards all her retinue. "And so I do keep silence," continued the faithful confidant, "van I am in the havens of Man; but when I am on the broad seas, den my tongue is mine own, you know. Die foolish beoples in the island, they say she is a wechsel-balg—what you call a fairy-elf changeling. My faith, they do not never have seen ein wechsel-balg; for I saw one myself at Cologne, and it was twice as big as yonder girl, and did break the poor people, with eating

them up, like de great big cuckoo in the sparrow's nest; but this Venella eat no more than other girls—it was no wechsel-balg in the world."

By a different train of reasoning, Julian had arrived at the same conclusion; in which, therefore, he heartily acquiesced. During the seaman's prosing, he was reflecting within himself, how much of the singular flexibility of her limbs and movements the unfortunate girl must have derived from the discipline and instructions of Adrian Brackel; and also how far the germs of her wilful and capricious passions might have been sown during her wandering and adventurous childhood. Aristocratic, also, as his education had been, these anecdotes respecting Fenella's original situation and education, rather increased his pleasure at having shaken off her company; and yet he still felt desirous to know any further particulars which the seaman could communicate on the same subject. But he had already told all he knew. Of her parents he knew nothing, except that "her father must have been a damned hundsfoot, and a schelm, for selling his own flesh and blood to Adrian Brackel;"

for by such a transaction had the mountebank become possessed of his pupil.

This conversation tended to remove any passing doubts which might have crept on Peveril's mind concerning the fidelity of the master of the vessel, who appeared from thence to have been a former acquaintance of the Countess, and to have enjoyed some share of her confidence. The threatening motion used by Fenella, he no longer considered as worthy of any notice, excepting as a new mark of the irritability of her temper.

He amused himself with walking the deck, and musing on his past and future prospects, until his attention was forcibly arrested by the wind, which began to rise in gusts from the north-west, in a manner so unfavourable to the course they intended to hold, that the master, after many efforts to beat against it, declared his bark, which was by no means an excellent sea-boat, was unequal to making Whitehaven; and that he was compelled to make a fair wind of it, and run for Liverpool. To this course, Peveril did not object. It saved him some land journey, in case he visited his father's castle; and the Countess's

commission would be discharged as effectually the one way as the other.

The vessel was put, accordingly, before the wind, and ran with great steadiness and velocity. The captain, notwithstanding, pleading some nautical hazards, chose to lay off, and did not attempt the mouth of the Mersey until morning, when Peveril had at length the satisfaction of being landed upon the quay of Liverpool, which even then shewed symptoms of the commercial prosperity that has since been carried to such a height.

The master, who was well acquainted with the port, pointed out to Julian a decent place of entertainment, chiefly frequented by sea-faring people; for, although he had been in the town formerly, he did not think it proper to go any where at present where he might have been unnecessarily recognized. Here he took leave of the seaman, after pressing upon him with difficulty a small present for his crew. As for his passage, the captain declined any recompence whatsoever; and they parted upon the most civil terms.

The inn to which he was recommended was full of strangers, seamen, and mercantile people, all intent upon their own affairs, and discussing them with noise and eagerness, peculiar to the business of a thriving sea-port. But although the general clamour of the public room, in which the guests mixed with each other, related chiefly to their own commercial dealings, there was a general theme mingling with them, which was alike common and interesting to all; so that, amidst disputes about freight, tonnage, demurrage, and such like, were heard the emphatic sounds of "Deep, damnable, accursed plot,"—"Bloody Papist villains,"—"The King in danger—the gallows too good for them," and so forth.

The fermentation excited in London had plainly reached even this remote sea-port, and was received by the inhabitants with the peculiar stormy energy which invests men in their situation with the character of the winds and waves with which they are chiefly conversant. The commercial and nautical interests of England were indeed

particularly anti-catholic; although it is not, perhaps, easy to give any distinct reason why they should be so, since theological disputes in general could scarce be considered as interesting to them. But zeal, amongst the lower orders at least, is often in an inverse ratio to knowledge; and sailors were not probably the less earnest and devoted Protestants, that they did not understand the controversy between the churches. As for the merchants, they were almost necessarily inimical to the gentry of Lancashire and Cheshire; many of whom still retained the faith of Rome, which was rendered ten times more odious to the men of commerce, as the badge of their haughty aristocratic neighbours.

From the little which Peveril heard of the sentiments of the people of Liverpool, he imagined he should act most prudently in leaving the place as soon as possible, and before any suspicion should arise of his having any connexion with the party which appeared to have become so obnoxious.

In order to accomplish his journey, it was

first necessary that he should purchase a horse; and for this purpose he resolved to have recourse to the stables of a dealer well-known at the time, and who dwelt in the outskirts of the place; and having obtained directions to his dwelling, he went thither to provide himself.

Joe Bridlesley's stables exhibited a large choice of good horses; for that trade was formerly more generally active than at present. It was an ordinary thing for a stranger to buy a horse for the purpose of a single journey, and to sell him, as well as he could, when he had reached the point of his destination; and hence there was a constant demand, and a corresponding supply; upon both of which, Bridlesley, and those of his trade, contrived, doubtless, to make handsome profits.

Julian, who was no despicable horse-jockey, selected for his purpose a strong well-made horse, about sixteen hands high, and had him led into the yard, to see whether his paces corresponded with his appearance. As these also gave perfect satisfaction to the customer, it remained only to

settle the price with Bridlesley; who of course swore his customer had pitched upon the best horse ever darkened the stable-door, since he had dealt that way; that no such horses were to be had now-a-days, for that the mares were dead that foaled them; and having named a corresponding price, the usual haggling commenced betwixt the seller and purchaser, for adjustment of what the French dealers call *le prix juste.*

The reader, if he is at all acquainted with this sort of traffic, well knows it is generally a keen encounter of wits, and attracts the notice of all the idlers within hearing, who are usually very ready to offer their opinions, or their evidence. Amongst these, upon the present occasion, was a thin man, rather less than the ordinary size, and meanly dressed; but whose interference was in a confident tone, and such as shewed himself master of the subject on which he spoke. The price of the horse being settled to about fifteen pounds, which was very high for the period, that of the saddle and bridle had next to be adjusted, and the thin mean-looking person before-mentioned, found nearly as much

to say on this subject as on the other. As his remarks had a conciliating and obliging tendency towards the stranger, Peveril concluded he was one of those idle persons, who, unable or unwilling to supply themselves with means of indulgence at their own cost, are not unwilling to deserve them at the hands of others, by a little officious complaisance; and considering that he might acquire some useful information from such a person, was just about to offer him the courtesy of a morning draught, when he observed he had suddenly left the yard. He had scarce remarked this circumstance, before a party of customers entered the place, whose haughty assumption of importance claimed the instant attention of Bridlesley, and all his militia of grooms and stable-boys.

"Three good horses," said the leader of the party, a tall bulky man, whose breath was drawn full and high, under a consciousness of fat, and of importance—"three good and able-bodied horses, for the service of the Commons of England."

Bridlesley said he had some horses which

might serve the Speaker himself at need; but that, to speak Christian truth, he had just sold the best in his stable to that gentleman present, who, doubtless, would give up the bargain if the horse was needed for the service of the state.

"You speak well, friend," said the important personage; and advancing to Julian, demanded, in a very haughty tone, the surrender of the purchase which he had just made.

Peveril, with some difficulty, subdued the strong desire which he felt to return a round refusal to so unreasonable a request, but fortunately, recollecting that the situation in which he at present stood, required, on his part, much circumspection, he replied simply, that upon shewing him any warrant to seize upon horses for the public service, he must of course submit to resign his purchase.

The man, with an air of extreme dignity, pulled from his pocket, and thrust into Peveril's hands, a warrant, subscribed by the Speaker of the House of Commons, empowering Charles Topham, their officer of the Black Rod, to pur-

sue and seize upon the persons of certain individuals named in the warrant; and of all other persons who are, or should be, accused by competent witnesses, of being accessory to, or favourers of, the hellish and damnable Popish Plot, at present carried on within the bowels of the kingdom; and charging all men, as they loved their allegiance, to render the said Charles Topham their readiest and most effective assistance, in execution of the duty entrusted to his care.

On perusing a document of such weighty import, Julian had no hesitation to give up his horse to this formidable functionary; whom somebody compared to a lion, which, as the House of Commons was pleased to maintain such an animal, they were under the necessity of providing for by frequent commitments; until "*take him, Topham,*" became a proverb, and a formidable one, in the mouth of the public.

The acquiescence of Peveril procured him some grace in the sight of the emissary; who, before selecting two horses for his attendants, gave permission to the stranger to purchase a grey horse, much inferior, indeed, to that which he had re-

signed, both in form and in action, but very little lower in price, as Mr Bridlesley, immediately on learning the demand for horses upon the part of the Commons of England, had passed a private resolution in his own mind, augmenting the price of his whole stud, by an imposition of at least twenty per cent, *ad valorem*.

Peveril adjusted and paid the price with much less argument than on the former occasion; for, to be plain with the reader, he had noticed in the warrant of Mr Topham, the name of his father, Sir Geoffrey Peveril of Martindale Castle, engrossed at full length, as one of those subjected to arrest by that officer.

When aware of this material fact, it became Julian's business to leave Liverpool directly, and carry the alarm to Derbyshire, if, indeed, Mr Topham had not already executed his charge in that country, which he thought unlikely, as it was probable they would commence by securing those who lived nearest to the sea-ports. A word or two which he overheard, strengthened his hopes.

"And hark ye, friend," said Mr ToPham;

"you will have the horses at the door of Mr Shortell, the mercer, in two hours, as we shall refresh ourselves there with a cool tankard, and learn what folks live in the neighbourhood that may be concerned in my way. And you will please to have that saddle padded, for I am told the Derbyshire roads are rough. And you, Captain Dangerfield, and Master Everett, you must put on your Protestant spectacles, and shew me where there is the shadow of a priest, or of a priest's favourer; for I am come down with a broom in my cap to sweep this north country of such like cattle."

One of the persons he thus addressed, who wore the garb of a broken-down citizen, only answered, "Ay, truly, Master Topham, it is time to purge the garner."

The other, who had a formidable pair of whiskers, a red nose, and a tarnished laced coat, together with a hat of Pistol's dimensions, was more loquacious. "I take it on my damnation," said this zealous Protestant witness, "that I will discover the marks of the beast on every one of them betwixt sixteen and seventy, as plainly as

if they had crossed themselves with ink, instead of holy water. Since we have a King willing to do justice, and a House of Commons to uphold prosecutions, why, damn me, the cause must not stand still for lack of evidence."

"Stick to that, noble captain," answered the officer; "but, prithee, reserve thy oaths for the court of justice; it is but sheer waste to throw them away, as you do, in your ordinary conversation."

"Fear you nothing, Master Topham," answered Dangerfield; "it is right to keep a man's gifts in use; and were I altogether to renounce oaths in my private discourse, how should I know how to use one when I needed it? But you hear me use none of your Papist abjurations. I swear not by the Mass, or before George, or by any thing that belongs to idolatry; but such downright oaths as may serve a poor Protestant gentleman, who would fain serve Heaven and the King."

"Bravely spoken, most noble Festus," said his yoke-fellow. "But do not suppose, that although I do not use to garnish my words with

oaths out of season, that I will be wanting, when called upon, to declare the height and the depth, the width and the length, of this hellish plot against the King and the Protestant faith."

Dizzy, and almost sick, with listening to the undisguised brutality of these fellows, Peveril having with difficulty prevailed on Bridlesley to settle his purchase, at length led forth his grey steed; but was scarce out of the yard, when he heard the following alarming conversation pass, of which he seemed himself the object.

"Who is that youth?" said the slow soft voice of the more precise of the two witnesses. "Methinks I have seen him somewhere before. Is he from these parts?"

"Not that I know of," said Bridlesley; who, like all the other inhabitants of England at the time, answered the interrogatories of these fellows with the deference which is paid in Spain to the questions of an inquisitor. "A stranger—entirely a stranger—never saw him before—a wild young colt, I warrant him; and knows a horse's mouth as well as I do."

"I begin to bethink me I saw such a face as his at the Jesuit's consult, in the White Horse Tavern," answered Everett.

"And I think I recollect,' said Captain Dangerfield——

"Come, come, master and captain," said the authoritative voice of Topham, "we will have none of your recollections at present. We all know what these are likely to end in. But I will have you know, you are not to run till the leash is slipped. The young man is a well-looking lad, and gave up his horse handsomely for the service of the House of Commons. He knows how to behave himself to his betters, I warrant you; and I scarce think he has enough in his purse to pay the fees."

This speech concluded the dialogue, which Peveril, finding himself so much concerned in the issue, thought it best to hear to an end. Now when it ceased, to get out of the town unobserved, and take the nearest way to his father's castle, seemed his wisest plan. He had settled his reckoning at the inn, and brought with him to Bridlesley's the small portmantle which con-

tained his few necessaries, so that he had no occasion to return thither. He resolved, therefore, to ride some miles before he stopped, even for the purpose of feeding his horse; and being pretty well acquainted with the country, he hoped to be able to push forward to Martindale Castle sooner than the worshipful Master Topham; whose saddle was, in the first place, to be padded, and who, when mounted, would, in all probability, ride with the precaution of those who require such security against the effects of a hard trot.

Under the influence of these feelings, Julian pushed for Warrington, a place with which he was well acquainted; but without halting in the town, he crossed the Mersey, by the bridge built by an ancestor of his friend the Earl of Derby, and continued his route towards Dishley, on the borders of Derbyshire. He might have reached this latter village easily, had his horse been fitter for a forced march; but in the course of the journey, he had occasion, more than once, to curse the official dignity of the person who had robbed him of his better horse, while taking the best di-

rection he could through a country with which he was only generally acquainted.

At length, near Altringham, a halt became unavoidable; and Peveril had only to look for some quiet and sequestered place of refreshment. This presented itself, in the form of a small cluster of cottages; the best of which united the characters of an alehouse and a mill, where the sign of the Cat (the landlord's faithful ally in defence of his meal-sacks) booted as high as Grimalkin in the fairy tale, and playing on the fiddle for the more grace, announced that John Whitecraft united the two honest occupations of landlord and miller; and, doubtless, took toll from the public in both capacities.

Such a place promised a traveller, who journeyed incognito, more safe, if not better, accommodation, than he was like to meet with in more frequented inns; and at the door of the Cat and Fiddle, Julian halted accordingly.

CHAPTER IX.

In these distracted times, when each man dreads
The bloody stratagems of busy heads.

OTWAY.

AT the door of the Cat and Fiddle, Julian received the usual attention paid to the customers of an inferior house of entertainment. His horse was carried by a ragged lad, who acted as hostler, into a paltry stable; where, however, it was tolerably supplied with food and litter.

Having seen the animal on which his comfort, perhaps his safety, depended, properly provided for, Peveril entered the kitchen, which indeed was also the parlour and hall of the little hostelry, to try what refreshment he could obtain for himself. Much to his satisfaction, he found there was only one guest in the kitchen beside himself; but he was less pleased when he

found that he must either go without dinner, or share with that single guest the only provisions which chanced to be in the house, namely, a dish of trouts and eels, which their host, the miller, had brought in from his mill-stream.

At the particular request of Julian, the landlady undertook to add a substantial dish of eggs and bacon, which perhaps she would not have undertaken for, had not the sharp eye of Peveril discovered the flitch hanging in its smoky retreat, when, as its presence could not be denied, the hostess was compelled to bring it forward as a part of her supplies.

She was a buxom dame, about thirty, whose comely and cheerful countenance did honour to the choice of the jolly miller, her loving mate; and was now stationed under the shade of an old-fashioned huge projecting chimney, within which it was her province to "work i' the fire," and provide for the wearied wayfaring man, the good things which were to send him rejoicing on his way. Although, at first, the honest woman seemed little disposed to give herself much additional trouble on Julian's account, yet the

good looks, handsome figure, and easy civility of her new guest, soon bespoke the principal part of her attention; and while busy in his service, she regarded him, from time to time, with looks, where something like pity mingled with complacency. The rich smoke of the rasher, and the eggs with which it was flanked, already spread itself through the apartment; and the hissing of these savoury viands bore chorus to the simmering of the pan, in which the fish were undergoing a slower decoction. The table was covered with a clean huck-a-buck napkin, and all was in preparation for the meal, which Julian began to expect with a good deal of impatience, when the companion who was destined to share it with him, entered the apartment.

At the first glance, Julian recognized, to his surprise, the same indifferently-dressed, thin-looking person, who, during the first bargain which he had made with Bridlesley, had officiously interfered with his advice and opinion. Displeased at having the company of any stranger forced upon him, Peveril was still less satisfied to find one who might make some claim of

acquaintance with him, however slender, since the circumstances in which he stood compelled him to be as reserved as possible. He therefore turned his back upon his destined messmate, and pretended to amuse himself by looking out of the window, determined to avoid all intercourse until it should be inevitably forced upon him.

In the meanwhile, the other stranger went straight up to the landlady, where she toiled on household cares intent, and demanded of her, what she meant by preparing bacon and eggs, when he had positively charged her to get nothing ready but the fish.

The good woman, important as every cook in the discharge of her duty, deigned not for some time so much as to acknowledge that she heard the reproof of her guest; and when she did so, it was only to repel it in a magisterial and authoritative tone.—“ If he did not like bacon—(bacon from their own hitch, well fed on peas and bran)—if he did not like bacon and eggs—(new-laid eggs, which she had brought in from the hen-roost with her own hands)—why

so put case—it was the worse for his honour, and the better for those who did."

"The better for those who like them?" answered the guest; "that is as much as to say I am to have a companion, good woman."

"Do not good woman me, sir," replied the miller's wife, "till I call you good man; and, I promise you, many would scruple to do that to one who does not love eggs and bacon of a Friday."

"Nay, my good lady," said her guest, "do not fix any misconstruction upon me—I dare say the eggs and the bacon are excellent; only, they are rather a dish too heavy for my stomach."

"Ay, or your conscience perhaps, sir," answered the hostess. "And now, I bethink me, you must needs have your fish fried with oil, instead of the good drippings I was going to put to them. I would I could spell the meaning of all this now; but I warrant John Bigstaff, the constable, could conjure something out of it."

There was a pause here; but Julian, some-

what alarmed at the tone which the conversation assumed, became interested in watching the dumb shew which succeeded. By bringing his head a little towards the left; but without turning round, or quitting the projecting latticed window where he had taken his station, he could observe that the stranger, secured, as he seemed to think himself, from observation, had sidled close up to the landlady; and, as he conceived, had put a piece of money into her hand. The altered tone of the miller's moiety corresponded very much with this supposition.

"Nay, indeed, and forsooth," she said, "her house was Liberty-hall; and so should every publican's be. What was it to her what gentlefolks ate or drank, providing they paid for it honestly? There were many honest gentlemen, whose stomachs could not abide bacon, grease, or dripping, especially on a Friday; and what was that to her, or any one in her line, so gentlefolks paid honestly for the trouble? Only, she would say, that her bacon and eggs could not be mended betwixt this and Liverpool; and that she would live and die upon."

"I shall hardly dispute it," said the stranger; and turning towards Julian, he added, "I wish this gentleman, who I suppose is my trencher-companion, much joy of the dainties which I cannot assist him in consuming."

"I assure you, sir," answered Peveril, who now felt himself compelled to turn about, and reply with civility, "that it was with difficulty I could prevail on my landlady to add my cover to yours, though she seems now such a zealot for the consumption of eggs and bacon."

"I am zealous for nothing," said the landlady, "save that men would eat their victuals, and pay their score; and if there be enough in one dish to serve two guests, I see little purpose in dressing them two; however, they are ready now, and done to a nicety.—Here, Alice! Alice!"

The sound of that well-known name made Julian start; but the Alice who replied to the call ill resembled the vision which his imagination connected with the accents, being a dowdy slip-shod wench, the drudge of the low inn which afforded him shelter. She assisted her mistress in putting on the table the dishes which the lat-

ter had prepared; and a foaming jug of home-brewed ale being placed betwixt them, was warranted by Dame Whitecraft as excellent; "for," said she, "we know by practice that too much water drowns the miller, and we spare it on our malt as we would in our mill-dam."

"I drink to your health in it, dame," said the elder stranger; "and a cup of thanks for these excellent fish; and to the drowning of all unkindness between us."

"I thank you, sir," said the dame, "and wish you the like; but I dare not pledge you, for our Gaffer says, the ale is brewed too strong for women; so I only drink a glass of canary at a time with a gossip, or any gentleman guest that is so minded."

"You shall drink one with me then, dame," said Peveril, "so you will let me have a flagon."

"That you shall, sir, and as good as ever was broached; but I must to the mill, to get the key from the goodman."

So saying, and tucking her clean gown through the pocket-holes, that her steps might be the

more alert, and her dress escape dust, off she tripped to the mill, which lay close adjoining.

"A dainty dame, and dangerous, is the miller's wife," said the stranger, looking at Peveril. "Is not that old Chaucer's phrase?"

"I—I believe so," said Peveril, not much read in Chaucer, who was then even more neglected than at present; and much surprised at a literary quotation from one of the mean appearance exhibited by the person before him.

"Yes," answered the stranger, "I see that you, like other young gentlemen of the time, are better acquainted with Cowley and Waller, than with the 'well of English undefiled.' I cannot help differing. There are touches of nature about the old bard of Woodstock, that, to me, are worth all the turns of laborious wit in Cowley, and all the ornate and artificial simplicity of his courtly competitor. The description, for instance, of his country coquette,—

'Wincing she was, as is a wanton colt,
Sweet as a flower, and upright as a bolt.'

Then again, for pathos, where will you mend the dying scene of Arcite?

‘Alas, my heartis queen! alas, my wife!
Giver at once, and ender of my life.
What is this world?—What axen men to have?
Now with his love—now in his cold grave
Alone, withouten other company.’

But I tire you, sir; and do injustice to the poet, whom I remember but by halves."

"On the contrary, sir," replied Peveril, "you make him more intelligible to me in your recitation, than I have found him when I have tried to peruse him myself."

"You were only frightened by the antiquated spelling, and ‘the letters black,’" said his companion. "It is many a scholar's case, who mistakes a nut, which he could crack with a little exertion, for a bullet, which he must needs break his teeth on; but yours are better employed.—Shall I offer you some of this fish?"

"Not so, sir," replied Julian, willing to shew himself a man of reading in his turn; "I hold with old Caius, and profess a fine judgment, to fight where I cannot chuse, and to eat no fish."

The stranger cast a startled look around him at this observation, which Julian had thrown

out, on purpose to ascertain, if possible, the quality of his companion, whose present language was so different from the character he had assumed at Bridlesley's. His countenance, too, although the features were of an ordinary, not to say mean cast, had that character of intelligence which education gives to the most homely face; and his manners were so easy and disembarrassed, as plainly shewed a complete acquaintance with society, as well as the habit of mingling with it in the higher stages. The alarm which he had evidently shewn at Peveril's answer, was but momentary; for he almost instantly replied, with a smile, "I promise you, sir, that you are in no dangerous company; for notwithstanding my fish dinner, I am much disposed to trifle with some of your savoury mess, if you will indulge me so far."

Peveril accordingly reinforced the stranger's trencher with what remained of the bacon and eggs, and saw him swallow a mouthful or two with apparent relish; but presently after, began to dally with his knife and fork, like one whose

appetite was satiated; then took a long draught of the black jack, and handed his platter to the large mastiff dog, who, attracted by the smell of the dinner, had sate before him for some time, licking his chops, and following with his eye every morsel which the guest raised to his head.

"Here, my poor fellow," said he, "thou hast had no fish, and needest this supernumerary trencher-load more than I do. I cannot withstand thy mute supplication any longer."

The dog answered these courtesies by a civil shake of the tail, while he gobbled up what was assigned him by the stranger's benevolence, in the greater haste, that he heard his mistress's voice at the door.

"Here is the canary, gentlemen," said the landlady; "and the goodman has set off the mill, to come to wait on you himself. He always does so, when company drink wine."

"That he may come in for the host's, that is, for the lion's share," said the stranger, looking at Peveril.

"The shot is mine," said Julian; "and if

mine host will share it, I will willingly bestow another quart on him, and on you, sir. I never break old customs."

These sounds caught the ear of Gaffer Whitecraft, who had entered the room, a strapping specimen of his robust trade, prepared to play the civil, or the surly host, as his company should be acceptable or otherwise. At Julian's invitation, he doffed his dusty bonnet—brushed from his sleeve the looser particles of his professional dust—and sitting down on the end of a bench, about a yard from the table, filled a glass of canary, and drank to his guests, and "especially to this noble gentleman," indicating Peveril, who had ordered the canary.

Julian returned the courtesy by drinking his health, and asking what news were about in the country.

"Nought, sir, I hears on nought, except this plot, as they call it, that they are pursuing the Papishers about; but it brings water to my mill, as the saying is. Between expresses hurrying hither and thither, and guards and prisoners riding to and again, and the custom of the

neighbours, that come to speak over the news of an evening, nightly I may say, instead of once a-week, why the spiggot is in use, gentlemen, and your landlord thrives; and then I, serving as constable, and being a known Protestant, I have tapped, I may venture to say, it may be ten stands of ale extraordinary, besides a reasonable sale of wine for a country corner. Heaven make us thankful, and keep all good Protestants from plot and Popery!"

"I can easily conceive, my friend," said Julian, "that curiosity is a passion which runs naturally to the alehouse; and that anger, and jealousy, and fear, are all of them thirsty passions, and great consumers of home-brewed. But I am a perfect stranger in these parts; and I would willingly learn, from a sensible man like you, a little of this same plot, of which men speak so much, and appear to know so little."

"Learn a little of it?—Why, it is the most horrible—the most damnable blood-thirsty beast of a plot—But hold, hold, my good master; I hope, in the first place, you believe there is a

plot? for, otherwise, the Justice must have a word with you, so sure as my name is John Whitecraft."

"It shall not need," said Peveril; "for I assure you, mine host, I believe in the plot as freely and fully as a man can believe in any thing he cannot understand."

"God forbid that any body should pretend to understand it," said the implicit constable; "for his worship the Justice says it is a mile beyond him; and he be as deep as most of them. But men may believe, though they do not understand; and that is what the Romanists say themselves. But this I am sure of, it makes a rare stirring time for justices, and witnesses, and constables.—So here's to your health again, gentlemen, in a cup of neat canary."

"Come, come, John Whitecraft," said his wife, "do not you demean yourself by naming witnesses along with justices and constables. All the world knows how they come by their money."

"Ay, but all the world knows that they *do* come by it, dame; and that is a great comfort

They rustle in their canonical silks, and swagger in their buff and scarlet, who but they?—Ay, ay, the cursed fox thrives—and not so cursed neither. Is there not Doctor Titus Oates, the saviour of the nation—does he not live at Whitehall, and eat off plate, and have a pension of thousands a-year, for what I know? and is he not to be Bishop of Litchfield, so soon as Doctor Doddrum dies?"

"Then I hope Doctor Doddrum's reverence will live these twenty years; and I dare say I am the first that ever wished such a wish," said the hostess. "I do not understand these doings, not I; and if a hundred Jesuits came to hold a consult at my house, as they did at the White Horse Tavern, I should think it quite out of the line of business to bear witness against them, provided they drank well, and paid their score."

"Very true, dame," said her elder guest; "that is what I call keeping a good publican conscience; and so I will pay score presently, and be jogging on my way."

Peveril, on his part, also demanded a reckoning, and discharged it so liberally, that the mill-

er flourished his hat as he bowed, and the hostess curtsied down to the ground.

The horses of both guests were brought forth; and they mounted, in order to depart in company. The host and hostess stood in the door, to see them depart. The landlord proffered a stirrup-cup to the elder guest, while the landlady offered Peveril a glass from her own peculiar bottle. For this purpose, she mounted on the horse-block, with flask and glass in hand; so that it was easy for the departing guest, although on horseback, to return the courtesy in the most approved manner, namely, by throwing his arm over his landlady's shoulder, and saluting her at parting.

Dame Whitecraft could not decline this familiarity; for there is no room for traversing upon a horse-block, and the hands which might have served her for resistance, were occupied with glass and bottle—matters too precious to be thrown away in such a struggle. Apparently, however, she had something else in her head; for, as, after a brief affectation of reluctance, she permitted

Peveril's face to approach her's, she whispered in his ear, "Beware of trapans!"—an awful intimation, which, in those days of distrust, suspicion, and treachery, was as effectual in interdicting free and social intercourse, as the advertisement of "man-traps and spring-guns," to protect an orchard. Pressing her hand, in intimation that he comprehended her hint, she shook his warmly in return, and bade God speed him. There was a cloud on John Whitecraft's brow; nor did his final farewell sound half so cordial as that which had been spoken within doors. But then Peveril reflected, that the same guest is not always equally acceptable to landlord and landlady; and unconscious of having done anything to excite the miller's displeasure, he pursued his journey without thinking farther of the matter.

Julian was a little surprised, and not altogether pleased, to find that his new acquaintance held the same road with him. He had many reasons for wishing to travel alone; and the hostess's caution still rung in his ears. If this man, possessed of so much shrewdness as his countenance

and conversation intimated, versatile, as he had occasion to remark, and disguised beneath his condition, should prove, as was likely, to be a concealed Jesuit or seminary-priest, travelling upon their great task of the conversion of England, and rooting out of the Northern heresy, —a more dangerous companion, for a person in his own circumstances, could hardly be imagined; since keeping society with him might seem to authorize whatever reports had been spread concerning the attachment of his family to the Catholic cause. At the same time, it was very difficult, without actual rudeness, to shake off the company of one who seemed determined, whether spoken to or not, to remain along-side of him.

Peveril tried the experiment of riding slow; but his companion, determined not to drop him, slackened his pace, so as to keep close by him. Julian then spurred his horse to a full trot; and was soon satisfied, that the stranger, notwithstanding the meanness of his appearance, was so much better mounted than himself, as to render vain any thoughts of outriding him. He pulled

up his horse to a more reasonable pace, therefore, in a sort of despair. Upon his doing so, his companion, who had been hitherto silent, observed, that Peveril was not so well qualified to try speed upon the road, as he would have been had he abode by his first bargain of horse-flesh that morning.

Peveril assented drily, but observed, that the animal would serve his immediate purpose, though he feared it would render him indifferent company for a person better mounted.

"By no means," answered his civil companion; "I am one of those who have travelled so much, as to be accustomed to make my journey at any rate of motion which may be most agreeable to my company."

Peveril made no reply to this polite intimation, being too sincere to tender the thanks which, in courtesy, were the proper answer.—A second pause ensued, which was broken by Julian asking the stranger whether their roads were likely to lie long together in the same direction.

"I cannot tell," said the stranger, smiling, "unless I knew which way you were travelling."

"I am uncertain how far I shall go to-night," said Julian, willingly misunderstanding the purport of the reply.

"And so am I," replied the stranger; "but though my horse goes better than yours, I think it will be wise to spare him; and in case our road continues to lie the same way, we are like to sup, as we have dined together."

Julian made no answer whatever to this round intimation, but continued to ride on, turning, in his own mind, whether it would not be wisest to come to a distinct explanation with his pertinacious attendant, and to explain, in so many words, that it was his pleasure to travel alone. But, besides that the sort of acquaintance which they had formed during dinner, rendered him unwilling to be directly uncivil towards a person of gentlemanlike manners, he had also to consider that he might very possibly be mistaken in this man's character, and purpose; in which case, the cynically refusing the society of a sound Protestant, would afford as pregnant matter of suspicion, as travelling in company with a disguised Jesuit.

After brief reflection, therefore, he resolved to endure the incumbrance of the stranger's society, until a fair opportunity should occur to rid himself of it; and in the meantime, to act with as much caution as he possibly could, in any communication that might take place between them; for Dame Whitecraft's parting caution still rang anxiously in his ears, and the consequences of his own arrest upon suspicion, must deprive him of every opportunity of serving his father, or the Countess, or Major Bridgenorth, upon whose interest, also, he had promised himself to keep an eye.

While he revolved these things in his mind, they had journeyed several miles without speaking; and now entered upon a more waste country, and worse roads, than they had hitherto found, being, in fact, approaching the more hilly county of Derbyshire. In travelling on a very stony and uneven lane, Julian's horse repeatedly stumbled; and had he not been supported by the rider's judicious use of aid and bit, must at length certainly have fallen under him.

"These are times which crave wary riding, sir," said his companion; "and by your seat in

the saddle, and your hand on the rein, you seem to understand it."

"I have been long a horseman, sir," answered Peveril.

"And long a traveller too, sir, I should suppose; since, by the great caution you observe, you seem to think the human tongue requires a curb, as well as the horse's jaws."

"Wiser men than I have been of opinion," answered Peveril, "that it were a part of prudence to be silent, when men have little or nothing to say."

"I cannot approve of their opinion," answered the stranger. "All knowledge is gained by communication, either with the dead, through books, or, more pleasingly, through the conversation of the living. The *deaf and dumb*, alone, are excluded from improvement; and surely their situation is not so enviable that we should imitate them."

At this illustration, which wakened a startling echo in Peveril's bosom, the young man looked hard at his companion; but in the composed countenance, and calm blue eye, he read no con-

sciousness of a farther meaning than the words immediately and directly implied. He paused a moment, and then answered, "You seem to be a person, sir, of shrewd apprehension; and I should have thought it might have occurred to you, that in the present suspicious times, men may, without censure, avoid communication with strangers. You know not me; and to me you are totally unknown. There is not room for much discourse between us, without trespassing on the general topics of the day, which carry in them seeds of quarrel between friends, much more betwixt strangers. At any other time, the society of an intelligent companion would have been most acceptable upon my solitary ride; but at present——"

"At present!" said the other, interrupting him. "You are like the old Romans, who held that *hostis* meant both a stranger and an enemy. I will therefore be no longer a stranger. My name is Ganlesse—by profession I am a Roman Catholic priest—I am travelling here in dread of my life—and I am very glad to have you for a companion."

"I thank you for the information, with all my heart," said Peveril; "and to avail myself of it to the uttermost, I must beg of you to ride forward, or lag behind, or take a side path, at your own pleasure; for as I am no Catholic, and travel upon business of high concernment, I am exposed both to risk and delay, and even to danger, by keeping such suspicious company. And so, Master Ganlesse, keep your own pace, and I will keep the contrary; for I beg leave to forbear your company."

As Peveril spoke thus, he pulled up his horse, and made a full stop.

The stranger burst out a-laughing. "What," he said, "you forbear my company for a trifle of danger? Saint Anthony! How the warm blood of the Cavaliers is chilled in the young men of the present day! This young gallant, now, has a father, I warrant you, who has endured as many adventures for hunted priests, as a knight-errant for distressed damsels."

"This raillery avails nothing, sir," said Peveril. "I must request you will keep your own way."

"My way is yours," said the pertinacious Master Ganlesse, as he called himself; "and we will both travel the safer, that we journey in company. I have the receipt of fern-seed, man, and walk invisible. Besides, you would not have me quit you in this lane, where there is no turn to right or left?"

Peveril moved on, desirous to avoid open violence; for which the indifferent tone of the traveller, indeed, afforded no apt pretext; yet highly disliking his company, and determined to take the first opportunity to rid himself of it.

The stranger proceeded the same pace with him, keeping cautiously on his bridle-hand, as if to secure that advantage in case of a struggle. But his language did not intimate the least apprehension. "You do me wrong," he said to Peveril, "and you equally wrong yourself. You are uncertain where to lodge to-night—trust to my guidance. Here is an ancient hall, within four miles, with an old knightly Pantaloon for its lord—an all-be-ruffed Dame Barbara for the lady gay—a Jesuit, in a butler's habit, to say

grace—an old tale of Edgehill and Worster fights to relish a cold venison pasty, and a flask of claret mantled with cobwebs—a bed for you in the priest's hiding-hole—and, for aught I know, pretty Mistress Betty, the dairy-maid, to make it ready."

"This has no charms for me, sir," said Peveril, who, in spite of himself, could not but be amused with the ready sketch which the stranger gave of many an old mansion in Cheshire and Derbyshire, where the owners retained the ancient faith of Rome.

"Well, I see I cannot charm you in this way," continued his companion; "I must strike another key. I am no longer Ganlesse, the seminary priest, but (changing his tone, and snuffling in the nose) Simon Canter, a poor preacher of the word, who travels this way to call sinners to repentance; and to strengthen, and to edify, and to fructify, among the scattered remnant who hold fast the truth.—What say you to this, sir?"

"I admire your versatility, sir, and could be entertained with it at another time. At present, sincerity is more in request."

"Sincerity!" said the stranger;—"A child's whistle, with but two notes in it—yea, yea, and nay, nay. Why, man, the very Quakers have renounced it, and have got in its stead a gallant recorder, called Hypocrisy, that is somewhat like Sincerity in form, but of much greater compass, and combines the whole gamut. Come, be ruled —be a disciple of Simon Canter for the evening, and we will leave the old tumble-down castle of the knight aforesaid, on the left hand, for a new brick-built mansion, erected by an eminent salt-boiler from Namptwich, who expects the said Simon to make a strong spiritual pickle for the preservation of a soul somewhat corrupted by the evil communications of this wicked world. What say you? He has two daughters—brighter eyes never beamed under a pinched hood; and for myself, I think there is more fire in those who live only to love and to devotion, than in your court beauties, whose hearts are running on twenty follies beside. You know not the pleasure of being conscience-keeper to a pretty precisian, who in one breath repeats her foibles, and in the next confesses her passion. Perhaps,

though, you may have known such in your day? Come, sir, it grows too dark to see your blushes; but I am sure they are burning on your cheek."

"You take great freedom, sir," said Peveril, as they now approached the end of the lane, where it opened on a broad common; "and you seem rather to count more on my forbearance, than you have room to do with safety. We are now nearly free of the lane which has made us companions for this last half hour. To avoid your further company, I will take the turn to the left, upon that common; and if you follow me, it shall be at your peril. Observe, I am well armed; and you will fight at odds."

"Not at odds," returned the provoking stranger, "while I have my brown jennet, with which I can ride round and around you at pleasure; and this text, of a handful in length, (shewing a pistol, which he drew from his bosom,) which discharges very convincing doctrine on the pressure of a fore-finger, and is apt to equalize all odds, as you call them, of youth and strength. Let there be no strife between us, however—the

moor lies before us—chuse your path on it—I take the other."

"I wish you good night, sir," said Peveril to the stranger. "I ask your forgiveness, if I have misconstrued you in any thing; but the times are perilous, and a man's life may depend on the society in which he travels."

"True," said the stranger; "but in your case, the danger is already undergone, and you should seek to counteract it. You have travelled in my company long enough to devise a handsome branch of the Popish Plot. How will you look, when you see come forth, in comely folio form, The Narrative of Simon Canter, otherwise called Stephen Ganlesse, concerning the horrid Popish Conspiracy for the Murther of the King, and Massacre of all Protestants, as given on oath to the Honourable House of Commons; setting forth, how far Julian Peveril, younger of Martindale Castle, is concerned in carrying on the same—"

"How, sir? What mean you?" said Peveril, much startled.

"Nay, sir," replied his companion, "do not

interrupt my title-page. Now that Oates and Bedloe have drawn the great prizes, the subordinate discoverers get little but by the sale of their narrative; and Janeway, Newman, Simmons, and every bookseller of them, will tell you that the title is half the narrative. Mine shall therefore set forth the various schemes you have communicated to me, of landing ten thousand soldiers from the Isle of Man upon the coast of Lancashire; and marching into Wales, to join the ten thousand pilgrims who are to be shipped from Spain; and so completing the destruction of the Protestant religion, and of the devoted city of London. Truly, I think such a narrative, well-spiced with a few horrors, and published, *cum privilegio parliamenti*, might, though the market be somewhat overstocked, be still worth some twenty or thirty pieces."

"You seem to know me, sir," said Peveril; "and if so, I think I may fairly ask you your purpose in thus bearing me company, and the meaning of all this rhapsody. If it be mere banter, I can endure it within proper limit; al-

though it is uncivil on the part of a stranger. If you have any further purpose, speak it out; I am not to be trifled with."

"Good, now," said the stranger, laughing, "into what an unprofitable chafe you have put yourself! An Italian *fuoruscito*, when he desires a parley with you, takes aim from behind a wall, with his long gun, and prefaces his conference with *Posso tirare*. So does your man-of-war fire a gun across the bows of a Hans-mogan Indiaman, just to bring her to; and so do I shew Master Julian Peveril, that, if I were one of the honourable society of witnesses and informers, with whom his imagination has associated me for these two hours past, he is as much within my danger now, as what he is ever likely to be." Then, suddenly changing his tone to serious, which was in general ironical, he added, "Young man, when the pestilence is diffused through the air of a city, it is in vain men would avoid the disease, by seeking solitude, and shunning the company of their fellow-sufferers."

"In what, then, consists their safety?" said

Peveril, willing to ascertain, if possible, the drift of his companion's purpose.

"In following the counsels of wise physicians;" such was the stranger's answer.

"And as such," said Peveril, "you offer me your advice?"

"Pardon me, young man," said the stranger, haughtily, "I see no reason I should do so.—I am not," he added, in his former tone, "your physician feed—I offer no advice—I only say it would be wise that you sought it."

"And from whom, or where, can I obtain it?" said Peveril. "I wander in this country, like one in a dream; so much a few months have changed it. Men who formerly occupied themselves with their own affairs, are now swallowed up in matters of state policy; and those tremble under the apprehension of some strange and sudden convulsion of empire, who were formerly only occupied by the fear of going to bed supperless. And to sum the matter, I meet a stranger, apparently well acquainted with my name and concerns, who first attaches himself to me,

whether I will or no; and then refuses me explanation of his business, while he menaces me with the strangest accusations."

"Had I meant such infamy," said the stranger, "believe me, I had not given you the thread of my intrigue. But be wise, and come on with me. There is, hard by, a small inn, where, if you can take a stranger's warrant for it, we shall sleep in perfect security."

"Yet you yourself," said Peveril, "but now were anxious to avoid observation; and in that case, how can you protect me?"

"Psha! I did but silence that tattling landlady, in the way in which such people are most readily hushed; and for Topham, and his brace of night owls, they must hawk at other and lesser game than I should prove."

Peveril could not help admiring the easy and confident indifference with which the stranger seemed to assume a superiority to all the circumstances of danger around him; and after hastily considering the matter with himself, came to the resolution to keep company with him for this night, at least; and to learn, if pos-

sible, who he really was, and to what party in the estate he was attached. The boldness and freedom of his talk seemed almost inconsistent with his following the perilous, though at that time the gainful trade of an informer. No doubt, such persons assumed every appearance which could insinuate them into the confidence of their destined victims; but Julian thought he discovered in this man's manner, a wild and reckless frankness, which he could not but connect with the idea of sincerity in the present case. He therefore answered, after a moment's recollection, "I embrace your proposal, sir; although, by doing so, I am reposing a sudden, and perhaps an unwary, confidence."

"And what am I, then, reposing in you?" said the stranger. "Is not our confidence mutual?"

"No; much the contrary. I know nothing of you whatever—you have named me; and, knowing me to be Julian Peveril, know you may travel with me in perfect security."

"The devil I do!" answered his companion. "I travel in the same security as with a lighted

petard, which I may expect to explode every moment. Are you not the son of Peveril of the Peak, with whose name Prelacy and Popery are so closely allied, that no old woman of either sex in Derbyshire, concludes her prayer without a petition to be freed from all three? And do you not come from the Popish Countess of Derby, bringing, for aught I know, a whole army of Manxmen in your pocket, with full complement of arms, ammunition, baggage, and a train of field artillery?"

"It is not very likely I should be so poorly mounted," said Julian, laughing, "if I had such a weight to carry. But lead on, sir. I see I must wait for your confidence, till you think proper to confer it; for you are already so well acquainted with my affairs, that I have nothing to offer you in exchange for it."

"*Allons*, then," said his companion; "give your horse the spur, and raise the curb rein, lest he measure the ground with his nose, instead of his paces. We are not now more than a furlong or two from the place of entertainment."

They mended their pace accordingly, and soon arrived at the small solitary inn which the traveller had mentioned. When its light began to twinkle before them, the stranger, as if recollecting something he had forgotten, "By the way, you must have a name to pass by; for it may be ill travelling under your own, as the fellow who keeps this house is an old Cromwellian. What will you call yourself?—My name is—for the present—Ganlesse."

"There is no occasion to assume a name at all," answered Julian. "I do not incline to use a borrowed one, especially as I may meet with some one who knows my own."

"I will call you Julian, then," said Master Ganlesse; "for Peveril will smell in the nostrils of mine host of idolatry, conspiracy, Smithfield faggots, fish upon Fridays, the murder of Sir Edmondbury Godfrey, and the fire of purgatory."

As he spoke thus, they alighted under the great broad-branched oak tree, which served to canopy the ale-bench, which, at an earlier hour,

had groaned under the weight of a frequent conclave of rustic politicians. Ganlesse, as he dismounted, whistled in a particularly shrill note, and was answered from within the house.

CHAPTER X.

He was a fellow in a peasant's garb;
Yet one could censure you a woodcock's carving,
Like any courtier at the ordinary.

The Ordinary.

The person who appeared at the door of the little inn to receive Ganlesse, as we mentioned in our last chapter, sung, as he came forward, this scrap of an old ballad,—

"Good even to you, Diccon;
And how have you sped?
Bring you the bonny bride
To banquet and bed?"

To which Ganlesse answered, in the same tone and tune,—

"Content thee, kind Robin;
He need little care,
Who brings home a fat buck
Instead of a hare."

"You have missed your blow, then," said the other, in reply.

"I tell you I have not," answered Ganlesse; "but you will think of nought but your own thriving occupation—May the plague that belongs to it stick to it! though it hath been the making of thee."

"A man must live, Diccon Ganlesse," said the other.

"Well, well," said Ganlesse, "bid my friend welcome, for my sake. Hast thou got any supper?"

"Reeking like a sacrifice—Chaubert has done his best. That fellow is a treasure! give him a farthing candle, and he will cook a good supper with it.—Come in, sir. My friend's friend is welcome, as we say in my country."

"We must have our horses looked to first," said Peveril, who began to be considerably uncertain about the character of his companions—"that done, I am for you."

Ganlesse gave a second whistle; a groom appeared, who took charge of both their horses, and they themselves entered the inn.

The ordinary room of a poor inn seemed to have undergone some alterations, to render it fit for company of a higher description. There were a beaufet, a couch, and one or two other pieces of furniture, of a style inconsistent with the appearance of the place. The table-cloth, which was ready laid, was of the finest damask; and the spoons, forks, &c. were of silver. Peveril looked at this apparatus with some surprise; and again turning his eyes attentively upon his travelling companion Ganlesse, he could not help discovering, (by the aid of imagination, perhaps,) that though insignificant in person, plain in features, and dressed like one in indigence, there lurked still about his person and manners, that indefinable ease of manner which belongs only to men of birth and quality, or to those who are in the constant habit of frequenting the best company. His companion, whom he called Will Smith, although tall, and rather good-looking, besides being much better dressed, had not, nevertheless, exactly the same ease of demeanour; and was obliged to make up for the want, by an additional proportion of assu-

rance. Who these two persons could be, Peveril could not attempt even to form a guess. There was nothing for it, but to watch their manner and conversation.

After speaking a moment in whispers, Smith said to his companion, "We must go look after our nags for ten minutes, and allow Chaubert to do his office."

"Will he not appear, and minister before us, then?" said Ganlesse.

"What, he?—he shift a trencher—he hand a cup?—no, you forget whom you speak of. Such an order were enough to make him fall on his own sword—he is already on the borders of despair, because no craw-fish are to be had."

"Alack-a-day!" replied Ganlesse. "Heaven forbid I should add to such a calamity! To stable, then, and see we how our steeds eat their provender, while ours is getting ready."

They adjourned to the stable accordingly, which, though a poor one, had been hastily supplied with whatever was necessary for the accommodation of four excellent horses; one of which,

that from which Ganlesse was just dismounted, the groom we have mentioned was cleaning and dressing by the light of a huge wax-candle.

"I am still so far Catholic," said Ganlesse, laughing, as he saw that Peveril noticed this piece of extravagance. "My horse is my saint, and I dedicate a candle to him."

"Without asking so great a favour for mine, which I see standing behind yonder old hen-coop," replied Peveril, "I will at least relieve him of his saddle and bridle."

"Leave him to the lad of the inn," said Smith; "he is not worthy any other person's handling; and I promise you, if you slip a single buckle, you will so flavour of that stable duty, that you might as well eat roast-beef as ragouts, for any relish you will have of them."

"I love roast-beef as well as ragouts, at any time," said Peveril, adjusting himself to a task which every young man should know how to perform when need is; "and my horse, though it be but a sorry jade, will champ better on hay and corn, than on an iron bit."

While he was unsaddling his horse, and shaking down some litter for the poor wearied animal, he heard Smith observe to Ganlesse,—"By my faith, Dick, thou hast fallen into poor Slender's blunder; missed Anne Page, and brought us a great lubberly post-master's boy."

"Hush, he will hear thee," answered Ganlesse; "there are reasons for all things—it is well as it is. But, prithee, tell thy fellow to help the youngster."

"What," replied Smith, "d'ye think I am mad?—Ask Tom Beacon—Tom of Newmarket—Tom of ten thousand, to touch such a four-legged brute as that?—Why, he would turn me away on the spot—discard me, i'faith. It was all he would do to take in hand your own, my good friend; and if you consider him not the better, you are like to stand groom to him yourself to-morrow."

"Well, Will," answered Ganlesse, "I will say that for thee, thou hast a set of the most useless, scoundrelly, insolent vermin about thee, that ever eat up a poor gentleman's revenues."

"Useless? I deny it," replied Smith. "Every

one of my fellows does something or other, so exquisitely, that it were sin to make him do any thing else—it is your jacks-of-all-trades who are masters of none.—But hark to Chaubert's signal! The coxcomb is twangling it on the lute, to the tune of *Eveillez vous, belle endormie.*—Come, Master What d'ye call, (addressing Peveril,)—get ye some water, and wash this filthy witness from your hand, as Betterton says in the play; for Chaubert's cookery is like Friar Bacon's Head —time is—time was—time will soon be no more."

So saying, and scarce allowing Julian time to dip his hands in a bucket, and dry them on a horse cloth, he hurried him from the stable back to the supper chamber.

Here all was prepared for their meal, with an epicurean delicacy, which rather belonged to the saloon of a palace, than the cabin in which it was displayed. Four dishes of silver, with covers of the same metal, smoked on the table; and three seats were placed for the company. Beside the lower end of the board, was a small side-table, to answer the purpose of what is now called a dumb waiter; on which several flasks reared their tall,

stately, and swan-like crests, above glasses and rummers. Clean covers were also placed within reach; and a small travelling-case of morocco, hooped with silver, displayed a number of bottles, containing the most approved sauces that culinary ingenuity had then invented.

Smith, who occupied the lower seat, and seemed to act as president of the feast, motioned the two travellers to take their places and begin. "I would not stay a grace-time," he said, "to save a whole nation from perdition. We could bring no chauffettes with any convenience; and even Chaubert is nothing, unless his dishes are tasted in the very moment of projection. Come, uncover, and let us see what he has done for us.—Hum!—ha!—ay—squab-pigeons—wild-fowl—young chickens—venison cutlets—and a space in the centre, wet, alas, by a gentle tear from Chaubert's eye, where should have been the *soupe d'ecrivisses!* The zeal of that poor fellow is ill repaid by his paltry ten louis per month."

"A mere trifle," said Ganlesse; "but like yourself, Will, he serves a generous master."

The repast now commenced; and Julian, though he had seen his young friend the Earl of Derby, and other gallants, affect a considerable degree of interest and skill in the science of the kitchen, and was not himself either an enemy or a stranger to the pleasures of a good table, found, that, on the present occasion, he was a mere novice. Both his companions, but Smith in especial, seemed to consider that they were now engaged in the only true and real business of life; and weighed all its minutiæ with a proportional degree of accuracy. To carve the morsel in the most delicate manner—and to apportion the proper seasoning with the accuracy of a chemist—to be aware, exactly, of the order in which one dish should succeed another, and to do plentiful justice to all—was a minuteness of science to which Julian had hitherto been a stranger.

At length Ganlesse paused, and declared the supper exquisite. "But, my friend Smith," he added, "are your wines curious? When you brought all that trash of plates and trumpery into Derbyshire, I hope you did not leave us at the

mercy of the strong ale of the shire, as thick and muddy as the squires who drink it?"

"Did I not know that *you* were to meet me, Dick Ganlesse?" answered their host. "And can you suspect me of such an omission? It is true, you must make Champagne and claret serve, for my Burgundy would not bear travelling. But if you have a fancy for sherry, or Vin de Cahors, I have a notion Chaubert and Tom Beacon have brought some for their own drinking."

"Perhaps the gentlemen would not care to impart," said Ganlesse.

"Oh, fie!—any thing in the way of civility," replied Smith. "They are, in truth, the best natured lads alive, when treated respectfully; so that if you would prefer——"

"By no means," said Ganlesse—"a glass of Champagne will serve in a scarcity of better."

"The cork shall start obsequious to my thumb,"

said Smith; and as he spoke, he untwisted the wire, and the cork struck the roof of the cabin. Each guest took a large rummer glass of the

sparkling beverage, which Peveril had judgment and experience enough to pronounce exquisite.

"Give me your hand, sir," said Smith; "it is the first word of sense you have spoken this evening."

"Wisdom, sir," replied Peveril, "is like the best ware in the pedlar's pack, which he never produces till he knows his customer."

"Sharp as mustard," returned the *bon vivant*; "but be wise, most noble pedlar, and take another rummer of this same flask, which you see I have held in an oblique position for your service—not permitting it to retrograde to the perpendicular. Nay, take it off before the bubble bursts on the rim, and the zest is gone."

"You do me honour, sir," said Peveril, taking the second glass. "I wish you a better office than that of my cup-bearer."

"You cannot wish Will Smith one more congenial to his nature," said Ganlesse. "Others have a selfish delight in the objects of sense. Will thrives, and is happy, by imparting them to others."

"Better help men to pleasures than to pains,

Master Ganlesse," answered Smith, somewhat angrily.

"Nay, wrath thee not, Will," said Ganlesse; "and speak no words in haste, lest you may have cause to repent at leisure. Do I blame thy social concern for the pleasures of others? Why, man, thou doest therein most philosophically multiply thine own. A man has but one throat, and can but eat, with his best efforts, some five or six times a-day; but thou dinest with every friend that cuts up a capon, and art quaffing wine in other men's gullets, from morning to night—*et sic de cæteris.*"

"Friend Ganlesse," returned Smith, "I prithee beware—thou knowest I can cut gullets as well as tickle them."

"Ay, Will," answered Ganlesse, carelessly; "I think I have seen thee wave thy whinyard at the throat of a Hogan-Mogan—a Netherlandish weasand, which expanded only on thy natural and mortal objects of aversion—Dutch cheese, rye-bread, pickled-herring, onions, and Geneva."

"For pity's sake, forbear the description!" said Smith; "thy words overpower the per-

fumes, and flavour the apartment like a dish of salmagundi!"

"But for an epiglottis like mine," continued Ganlesse, "down which the most delicate morsels are washed by such claret as thou art now pouring out, thou couldst not, in thy bitterest mood, wish a worse fate than to be necklaced somewhat tight by a pair of white arms?"

"By a tenpenny cord," answered Smith; "but not till you were dead; that thereafter you be presently disembowelled, you being yet alive; that your head be then severed from your body, and your body divided into quarters, to be disposed of at his Majesty's pleasure.—How like you that, Master Richard Ganlesse?"

"E'en as you like the thoughts of dining on bran-bread and milk-porridge—an extremity which you trust never to be reduced to. But all this shall not prevent me from pledging you in a cup of sound claret."

As the claret circulated, the glee of the company increased; and Smith, placing the dishes which had been made use of upon the side-table, stamped with his foot on the floor, and the table,

sinking down a trap, again arose, loaded with olives, sliced neat's tongue, caviare, and other provocatives for the circulation of the bottle.

"Why, Will," said Ganlesse, "thou art a more complete mechanist than I suspected; thou hast brought thy scene-shifting inventions to Derbyshire in marvellously short time."

"A rope and pullies can be easily come by," answered Will; "and with a saw and a plane, I can manage that business in half a day. I love that knack of clean and secret conveyance—thou knowest it was the foundation of my fortunes."

"It may be the wreck of them too, Will," replied his friend.

"True, Diccon," answered Will; "but *vivimus dum vivamus*, that is my motto; and therewith I present you a brimmer to the health of the fair lady you wot of."

"Let it come, Will," replied his friend, and the flask circulated briskly from hand to hand.

Julian did not think it prudent to seem a check on their festivity, as he hoped in its progress something might occur to enable him to judge of

the character and purposes of his companions. But he watched them in vain. Their conversation was animated and lively, and often bore reference to the literature of the period, in which the elder seemed particularly well skilled. They also talked freely of the court, and of that numerous class of gallants who were then described as "men of wit and pleasure about town;" and to whom it seemed probable they themselves appertained.

At length the universal topic of the Popish Plot was started; upon which Ganlesse and Smith seemed to entertain the most opposite opinions. Ganlesse, if he did not maintain the authority of Oates in its utmost extent, contended that at least it was confirmed in a great measure by the murder of Sir Edmondsbury Godfrey, and the letters written by Coleman to the confessor of the French King.

With much more noise, and less power of reasoning, Will Smith hesitated not to ridicule and run down the whole discovery, as one of the wildest and most causeless alarms which had ever

been sounded in the ears of a credulous public. "I shall never forget," he said, "Sir Godfrey's most original funeral. Two bouncing parsons, well armed with sword and pistol, mounted the pulpit, to secure the third fellow who preached from being murdered in the face of the congregation. Three parsons in one pulpit—three suns in one hemisphere—no wonder men stood aghast at such a prodigy."

"What then, Will," answered his companion, "you are one of those who think the good knight murdered himself, in order to give credit to the plot?"

"By my faith not I," said the other; "but some true blue Protestant might do the job for him, in order to give the thing a better colour. —I will be judged by our silent friend, whether that be not the most feasible solution of the whole."

"I pray you, pardon me, gentlemen," said Julian; "I am but just landed in England, and am a stranger to the particular circumstances which have thrown the nation into such ferment. It

would be the highest degree of assurance in me to give my opinion betwixt gentlemen who argue the matter so ably; besides, to say truth, I confess weariness—your wine is more potent than I expected, or I have drank more of it than I meant to do."

"Nay, if an hour's nap will refresh you," said the elder of the strangers, "make no ceremony with us. Your bed—all we can offer as such—is that old-fashioned Dutch-built sofa, as the last new phrase calls it. We shall be early stirrers to-morrow morning."

"And that we may be so," said Smith, "I propose that we do sit up all this night—I hate lying rough, and detest a pallet-bed. So have at another flask, and the newest lampoon to help it out—

> Now a plague of their votes
> Upon papists and plots,
> And be d—d Doctor Oates.
> Tol de rol.

"Nay, but our Puritanic host," said Ganlesse.

"I have him in my pocket, man—his eyes,

ears, nose, and tongue," answered his boon companion, "are all in my possession."

"In that case, when you give him back his eyes and nose, I pray you keep his ears and tongue," answered Ganlesse. "Seeing and smelling are organs sufficient for such a knave—to speak and hear, are things he should have no manner of pretensions to."

"I grant you it were well done," answered Smith; "but it were a robbing of the hangman and the pillory; and I am an honest fellow, who would give Dun and the devil his due. So

All joy to great Cæsar,
Long life, love, and pleasure;
May the King live for ever,
'Tis no matter for us, boys."

While this Bacchanalian scene proceeded, Julian had wrapt himself closely in his cloak, and stretched himself on the couch which they had shewed to him. He looked towards the table he had left—the tapers seemed to become hazy and dim as he gazed—he heard the sound of voices, but they ceased to convey any impression to his

understanding; and in a few minutes, he was faster asleep than he had ever been in the whole course of his life.

CHAPTER XI.

The Gordon then his bugle blew,
And said, awa, awa;
The House of Rhodis is all on flame,
I hauld it time to ga'.

Old Ballad.

When Julian awakened the next morning, all was still and vacant in the apartment. The rising sun, which shone through the half-closed shutters, shewed some reliques of the last night's banquet, which his confused and throbbing head assured him had been carried into a debauch.

Without being much of a boon companion, Julian, like other young men of the time, was not in the habit of shunning wine, which was then used in considerable quantities; and he could not help being surprised, that the few cups he had drunk over night had produced on his

frame the effects of excess. He rose up, adjusted his dress, and sought the apartment for water to perform his morning ablutions, but without success. Wine there was on the table; and beside it one stool stood, and another lay, as if thrown down in the heedless riot of the evening. Surely, he thought to himself, the wine must have been very powerful, which rendered me insensible to the noise my companions must have made ere they finished their carouse.

With momentary suspicion he examined his weapons, and the packet which he had received from the Countess, and kept in a secret pocket of his upper-coat, bound close about his person. All was safe; and the very operation reminded him of the duties which lay before him. He left the apartment where they had supped, and went into another, wretched enough, where, in a truckle-bed, were stretched two bodies, covered with a rug, the heads belonging to which were amicably deposited upon the same truss of hay. The one was the black shock-head of the groom; the other, graced with a long thrumb night-cap, shewed a grizzled pate, and a grave caricatured

countenance, which the hook-nose and lantern-jaws proclaimed to belong to the Gallic minister of good cheer, whose praises he had heard sung forth on the preceding evening. These worthies seemed to have slumbered in the arms of Bacchus as well as of Morpheus, for there were broken flasks on the floor; and their deep snoring alone showed that they were alive.

Bent upon resuming his journey, as duty and expedience alike dictated, Julian next descended the trap-stair, and essayed a door at the bottom of the steps. It was fastened within. He called—no answer was returned. It must be, he thought, the apartment of the revellers, now probably sleeping as soundly as their dependants still slumbered, and as he himself had done a few minutes before. Should he awake them?—To what purpose? They were men with whom accident had involved him against his own will; and situated as he was, he thought it wise to take the earliest opportunity of breaking off from society, which was suspicious, and might be perilous. Ruminating thus, he essayed another door, which admitted him to a bed-

room, where lay another harmonious slumberer. The mean utensils, pewter measures, empty cans and casks, with which this room was lumbered, proclaimed it that of the host, who slept, surrounded by his professional implements of hospitality and stock in trade.

This discovery relieved Peveril from some delicate embarrassment which he had formerly entertained. He put upon the table a piece of money, sufficient, as he judged, to pay his share of the preceding night's reckoning; not caring to be indebted for his entertainment to the strangers, whom he was leaving without the formality of an adieu.

His conscience cleared of this gentleman-like scruple, Peveril proceeded with a light heart, though somewhat a dizzy head, to the stable, which he easily recognized among a few other paltry out-houses. His horse, refreshed with rest, and perhaps not unmindful of his services the evening before, neighed as his master entered the stable; and Peveril accepted the sound as an omen of a prosperous journey. He paid the au-

gury with a sieve-full of corn; and, while his palfrey profited by his attention, walked into the fresh air to cool his heated blood, and consider what course he should pursue in order to reach the Castle of Martindale before sunset. His acquaintance with the country in general, gave him confidence that he could not have greatly deviated from the nearest road; and with his horse in good condition, he conceived he might easily reach Martindale before night-fall.

Having adjusted his route in his mind, he returned into the stable to prepare his steed for the journey, and soon led him into the ruinous courtyard of the inn, bridled, saddled, and ready to be mounted. But as Peveril's hand was upon the mane, and his left foot in the stirrup, a hand touched his cloak, and the voice of Ganlesse said, "What, Master Peveril, is this your foreign breeding? or have you learned in France to take French leave of your friends?"

Julian started like a guilty thing, although a moment's reflection assured him that he was neither wrong nor in danger. "I cared not to disturb you," he said, "although I did come as far

as the door of your chamber. I supposed your friend and you might require, after our last night's revel, rather sleep than ceremony. I left my own bed, though a rough one, with more reluctance than usual; and as my occasions oblige me to be an early traveller, I thought it best to depart without leave-taking. I have left a token for mine host, on the table of his apartment."

"It was unnecessary," said Ganlesse; "the rascal is already overpaid.—But are you not rather premature in your purpose of departing? My mind tells me that Master Julian Peveril had better proceed with me to London, than turn aside for any purpose whatever. You may see already, that I am no ordinary person, but a master-spirit of the time. For the cuckoo I travel with, and whom I indulge in his prodigal follies, he also has his uses. But you are of a different cast; and I not only would serve you, but even wish you to be my own."

Julian gazed on this singular person when he spoke. We have already said his figure was mean and slight, with very ordinary and unmarked features, unless we were to distinguish the lighten-

ings of a keen grey eye, which corresponded, in its careless and prideful glance, with the haughty superiority which the stranger assumed in his conversation. It was not till after a momentary pause, that Julian replied, "Can you wonder, sir, that in my circumstances—if they are indeed known to you—I should decline unnecessary confidence on the affairs of moment which have called me hither, or refuse the company of a stranger, who assigns no reason for desiring mine?"

"Be it as you list, young man," answered Ganlesse; "only remember hereafter, you had a fair offer—it is not every one to whom I would have made it. If we should meet hereafter, on other, and on worse terms, impute it to yourself, and not to me."

"I understand not your threat," answered Peveril, "if a threat be indeed implied. I have done no evil—I feel no apprehension—and I cannot, in common sense, conceive why I should suffer for refusing my confidence to a stranger, who seems to require that I should submit me blindfold to his guidance."

"Farewell, then, Sir Julian of the Peak,—that may soon be," said the stranger, removing the hand which he had as yet left carelessly on the horse's bridle.

"How mean you by that phrase?" said Julian; "and why apply such a title to me?"

The stranger smiled, and only answered, "Here our conference ends. The way is before you. You will find it longer and rougher than that by which I would have guided you."

So saying, Ganlesse turned his back and walked toward the house. On the threshold he turned about once more, and seeing that Peveril had not yet moved from the spot, he again smiled and beckoned to him; but Julian, recalled by that sign to recollection, spurred his horse, and set forward on his journey.

It was not long ere his local acquaintance with the country enabled him to regain the road to Martindale, from which he had diverged on the preceding evening for about two miles. But the roads, or rather the paths, of this wild country, so much satirized by their native poet, Cotton,

were so complicated in some places, so difficult to be traced in others, and so unfit for hasty travelling in almost all, that, in spite of Julian's utmost exertions, and though he made no longer delay upon the journey than was necessary to bait his horse at a small hamlet through which he passed at noon, it was night-fall ere he reached an eminence, from which, an hour sooner, the battlements of Martindale-Castle would have been visible; and where, when they were hid in night, their situation was indicated by a light constantly maintained in a lofty tower, called the Warder's Turret; and which domestic beacon had acquired, through all the neighbourhood, the name of Peveril's Pole-star.

This was regularly kindled at curfew toll, and supplied with as much wood and charcoal as maintained the light till sunrise; and at no period was the ceremonial omitted, saving during the space intervening between the death of a Lord of the Castle and his interment. When this last event had taken place, the nightly beacon was rekindled with some ceremony, and continued till fate

called the successor to sleep with his fathers. It is not known from what circumstances the practice of maintaining this light originally sprung. Tradition spoke of it doubtfully. Some thought it was the signal of general hospitality, which, in ancient times, guided the wandering knight, or the weary pilgrim, to rest and refreshment. Others spoke of it as a "love-lighted watchfire," by which the provident anxiety of a former lady of Martindale guided her husband homewards through the terrors of a midnight storm. The less favourable construction of unfriendly neighbours of the dissenting persuasion, ascribed the origin and continuance of this practice, to the assuming pride of the family of Peveril, who thereby chose to intimate their ancient *suzeraintè* over the whole country, in the manner of the admiral, who carries the lantern in the poop, for the guidance of the fleet. And in the former times, our old friend, Master Solsgrace, dealt from the pulpit many a hard hit against Sir Geoffrey, as he that had raised his horn, and set up his candlestick on high. Certain it is, that all the Peverils, from father to son,

had been especially attentive to the maintenance of this custom, as something intimately connected with the dignity of their family; and in the hands of Sir Geoffrey, the observance was not like to be omitted.

Accordingly, the polar-star of Peveril had continued to beam more or less brightly during all the vicissitudes of the Civil War; and glimmered, however faintly, during the subsequent period of Sir Geoffrey's depression. But he was often heard to say, and sometimes to swear, that while there was a perch of woodland left to the estate, the old beacon-grate should not lack replenishing. All this his son Julian well knew; and therefore it was with no ordinary feelings of surprise and anxiety, that, looking in the direction of the Castle, he perceived that the light was not visible. He halted—rubbed his eyes—shifted his position—and endeavoured, in vain, to persuade himself that he had mistaken the point from which the polar-star of his house was visible, or that some newly intervening obstacle, the growth of a plantation, perhaps, or the erec-

tion of some building, intercepted the light of the beacon. But a moment's reflection assured him, that from the high and free situation which Martindale-Castle bore in reference to the surrounding country, this could not have taken place, and the inference necessarily forced itself upon his mind, that Sir Geoffrey, his father, was either deceased, or that the family must have been disturbed by some strange calamity, under the pressure of which, their wonted custom, and solemn usage, had been neglected.

Under the influence of undefinable apprehension, young Peveril now struck the spurs into his jaded steed, and forcing him down the broken and steep path, at a pace which set safety at defiance, he arrived at the village of Martindale-Moultrassie, eagerly desirous to ascertain the cause of this ominous eclipse. The street, through which his tired horse paced slow and reluctantly, was now deserted and empty; and scarce a candle twinkled from a casement, excepting from the latticed window of the little inn, called the Peveril Arms, from which a broad light shone, and several voices were heard in rude festivity.

Before the door of this inn, the jaded palfrey, guided by the instinct or experience which makes a hackney well acquainted with the outside of a house of entertainment, made so sudden and determined a pause, that notwithstanding his haste, the rider thought it best to dismount, expecting to be readily supplied with a fresh horse by Roger Raine, the landlord, the ancient dependant of his family. He also wished to relieve his anxiety, by inquiring concerning the state of things at the Castle, when he was surprised to hear, bursting from the tap-room of the loyal old host, a well-known song of the Commonwealth time, which some puritanical wag had written in reprehension of the Cavaliers, and their dissolute courses, and in which his father came in for a lash of the satirist.

Ye thought in the world there was no power to tame ye,
So you tippled and drab'd till the saints overcame ye,
"Forsooth," and "Ne'er stir," sir, have vanquished, "G—
d—n me,"
Which nobody can deny.

There was bluff old Sir Geoffrey loved brandy and mum well,
And to see a beer-glass turn'd over the thumb well;
But he fled like the wind, before Fairfax and Cromwell,
Which nobody can deny.

Some strange revolution, Julian was aware, must have taken place, both in the village and in the Castle, ere these sounds of unseemly insult could have been poured forth in the very inn which was decorated with the armorial bearings of his family; and not knowing how far it might be advisable to intrude on these unfriendly revellers, without the power of repelling or chastising their insolence, he led his horse to a back-door, which, as he recollected, communicated with the landlord's apartment, determined to make private inquiry at him concerning the state of matters at the Castle. He knocked repeatedly, and as often called on Roger Raine with an earnest but stifled voice. At length a female voice replied, by the usual inquiry, "Who is there?"

"It is I, Dame Raine—I, Julian Peveril—tell your husband to come to me presently."

"Alack, and a well-a-day, Master Julian, if it be really you—you are to know my poor good man has gone where he can come to no one; but, doubtless, we shall all go to him, as Matthew Chamberlain says."

"He is dead, then?" said Julian. "I am extremely sorry——"

"Dead six months and more, Master Julian; and let me tell you, it is a long time for a lone woman, as Mat Chamberlain says."

"Well, do you or your chamberlain undo the door. I want a fresh horse; and I want to know how things are at the Castle."

"The Castle—lack-a-day!—Chamberlain—Matthew Chamberlain—I say, Mat!"

Mat Chamberlain apparently was at no great distance, for he presently answered her call; and Peveril, as he stood close to the door, could hear them whispering to each other, and distinguish in a great measure what they said. And here it may be noticed, that Dame Raine, accustomed to submit to the authority of old Roger, who vindicated as well the husband's domestic prerogative, as that of the monarch in the state, had, when left a buxom widow, been so far incommoded by the exercise of her newly acquired independence, that she had recourse, upon all occasions, to the advice of Mat Chamberlain; and as Mat began no

longer to go slipshod, and in a red night-cap, but wore Spanish shoes, and a high-crowned beaver, (at least of a Sunday,) and moreover was called Master Matthew by his fellow-servants, the neighbours in the village argued a speedy change of the name on the sign-post; nay, perhaps, of the very sign itself, for Matthew was a bit of a Puritan, and no friend to Peveril of the Peak.

"Now counsel me, an' you be a man, Mat Chamberlain," said Widow Raine; "for never stir, if here be not Master Julian's own self, and he wants a horse, and what not, and all as if things were as they wont to be."

"Why, dame, an ye will walk by counsel," said the Chamberlain, "e'en shake him off—let him be jogging while his boots are green. This is no world for folks to scald their fingers in other folks' broth."

"And that is well spoken, truly," answered Dame Raine; "but then, look you, Mat, we have eaten their bread, and, as my poor goodman used to say——"

"Nay, nay, dame, they that walk by the coun-

sel of the dead, shall have none of the living; and so you may do as you list; but if you will walk by mine, drop latch, and draw bolt, and bid him seek quarters farther—that is my counsel."

"I desire nothing of you, sirrah," said Peveril, "save but to know how Sir Geoffrey and his lady do?"

"Lack-a-day!—lack-a-day!" in a tone of sympathy, was the only answer he received from the landlady; and the conversation betwixt her and her chamberlain was resumed, but in a tone too low to be overheard.

At length Mat Chamberlain spoke aloud, and with a tone of authority: "We undo no doors at this time of night, for it is against the Justices' orders, and might cost us our license; and for the Castle, the road up to it lies before you, and I think you know it as well as we do."

"And I know you," said Peveril, remounting his wearied horse, "for an ungrateful churl, whom, on the first opportunity, I will cudgel to a mummy."

To this menace Matthew made no reply, and Peveril presently heard him leave the apartment,

after a few earnest words betwixt him and his mistress.

Impatient at this delay, and at the evil omen implied in these people's conversation and deportment, Peveril, after some vain spurring of his horse, which positively refused to move a step farther, dismounted once more, and was about to pursue his journey on foot, notwithstanding the extreme disadvantage under which the high riding-boots of the period laid those who attempted to walk with such incumbrances, when he was stopped by a gentle call from the window.

Her counsellor was no sooner gone, than the good-nature and habitual veneration of the dame for the house of Peveril, and perhaps some fear for her counsellor's bones, induced her to open the casement, and cry, but in a low and timid tone, "Hist! hist! Master Julian—be you gone?"

"Not yet, dame," said Julian; "though it seems my stay is unwelcome."

"Nay, but good young master, it is because men counsel so differently; for here was my poor old Roger Raine would have thought the chim-

ney corner too cold for you; and here is Mat Chamberlain thinks the cold court-yard is warm enough."

"Never mind that, dame," said Julian; "do but only tell me what has happened at Martindale-Castle? I see the beacon is extinguished."

"Is it in troth?—ay, like enough—then good Sir Geoffrey is gone to Heaven with my old Roger Raine!"

"Sacred Heaven!" exclaimed Peveril; "when was my father taken ill?"

"Never, as I knows of," said the dame; "but, about three hours since, arrived a party at the Castle, with buff-coats and bandaliers, and one of the Parliament's folks, like in Oliver's time. My old Roger Raine would have shut the gates of the inn against them, but he is in the church-yard, and Mat says it is against law; and so they came in and refreshed men and horse, and sent for Master Bridgenorth, that is at Moultrassie-Hall even now; and so they went up to the Castle, and there was a fray, it is like, as the old Knight was no man to take napping, as poor Roger Raine used to say. Always the officers had the best

on't; and reason there is, since they had law of their side, as our Matthew says. But since the poll-star of the Castle is out, as your honour says, why, doubtless, the old gentleman is dead."

"Gracious Heaven!—Dear dame, for love or gold, let me have a horse to make for the Castle."

"The Castle?" said the dame; "the Roundheads, as my poor Roger called them, will kill you as they have killed your father! Better creep into the wood-house, and I will send Bett with a blanket and some supper—Or stay—my old Dobbin stands in the little stable beside the hen-coop—e'en take him, and make the best of your way out of the country, for there is no safety here for you. Hear what songs some of them are singing at the tap!—so take Dobbin, and do not forget to leave your own horse instead."

Peveril waited to hear no further, only, that just as he turned to go off to the stable, the compassionate female was heard to exclaim,—"O Lord! what will Matthew Chamberlain say?" but instantly added, "Let him say what he will, I may dispose of what's my own."

With the haste of a double-feed hostler did

Julian exchange the equipments of his jaded brute with poor Dobbin, who stood quietly tugging at his rack-full of hay, without dreaming of the business which was that night destined for him. Notwithstanding the darkness of the place, Julian succeeded marvellous quickly in preparing for his journey; and leaving his own horse to find its way to Dobbin's rack by instinct, he leaped upon his new acquisition, and spurred him sharply against the hill, which rises steeply from the village to the Castle. Dobbin, little accustomed to such exertions, snorted, panted, and trotted as briskly as he could, until at length he brought his rider before the entrance-gate of his father's ancient seat.

The moon was now rising, but the portal was hidden from its beams, being situated, as we have mentioned elsewhere, in a deep recess betwixt two large flanking towers. Peveril dismounted, turned his horse loose, and advanced to the gate, which, contrary to his expectation, he found was open. He entered the large court-yard; and could then perceive that lights yet twinkled in the lower

part of the building, although he had not before observed them, owing to the height of the outward walls. The main door, or great hall-gate, as it was called, was, since the partially decayed state of the family, seldom opened, save on occasions of particular ceremony. A smaller postern door served the purpose of ordinary entrance; and to that Julian now repaired. This also was open—a circumstance which would of itself have alarmed him, had he not already had so many causes for apprehension. His heart sunk within him as he turned to the left, through a small outward hall, towards the great parlour, which the family usually occupied as a sitting apartment; and his alarm became still greater, when, on a nearer approach, he heard proceeding from thence the murmur of several voices. He threw the door of the apartment wide; and the sight which was thus displayed, warranted all the evil bodings which he had entertained.

In front of him stood the old Knight, whose arms were strongly secured, over the elbows, by a leathern belt drawn tight round them, and

made fast behind; two ruffianly looking men, apparently his guards, had hold of his doublet. The scabbardless sword which lay on the floor, and the empty sheath which hung by Sir Geoffrey's side, shewed the stout old Cavalier had not been reduced to this state of bondage without an attempt at resistance. Two or three persons, having their backs turned towards Julian, sat round a table, and appeared engaged in writing—the voices which he had heard were theirs, as they murmured to each other. Lady Peveril—the emblem of death, so pallid was her countenance—stood at the distance of a yard or two from her husband, upon whom her eyes were fixed with an intenseness of gaze, like that of one who looks her last on the object which she loves the best. She was the first to perceive Julian; and she exclaimed, "Merciful Heaven!—my son!—the misery of our house is complete!"

"My son!" echoed Sir Geoffrey, starting from the sullen state of dejection, and swearing a deep oath—"thou art come in the right time, Julian. Strike me one good blow—cleave me

that traitorous thief from the crown to the brisket; and that done I care not what comes next."

The sight of his father's situation made the son forget the inequality of the contest which he was about to provoke.

"Villains," he said, "unhand him!" and rushing on the guards with his drawn sword, compelled them to let go Sir Geoffrey, and stand on their own defence.

Sir Geoffrey, thus far liberated, shouted to his lady, "Undo the belt, dame, and we will have three good blows for it yet—they must fight well that beat both father and son."

But one of those men who had started up from the writing-table when the fray commenced, prevented Lady Peveril from rendering her husband this assistance; while another easily mastered the hampered Knight, though not without receiving several severe kicks from his heavy boots—his condition permitting him no other mode of defence. A third, who saw that Julian, young, active, and animated with the fury of a son who fights for his parents, was compelling the two

guards to give ground, seized on his collar, and attempted to master his sword. Suddenly dropping that weapon, and snatching one of his pistols, Julian fired it at the head of the person by whom he was thus assailed. He did not drop, but, staggering back as if he had received a severe blow, shewed Peveril, as he sunk into a chair, the features of old Bridgenorth, blackened with the explosion, which had even set fire to a part of his grey hair. A cry of astonishment escaped from Julian; and in the alarm and horror of the moment, he was easily secured and disarmed by those with whom he had been at first engaged.

"Heed it not, Julian," said Sir Geoffrey; "heed it not, my brave boy—that shot has balanced all accompts!—But how—what the devil—he lives!—Was your pistol loaded with chaff? or has the foul fiend given him proof against lead?"

There was some reason for Sir Geoffrey's surprise, since, as he spoke, Major Bridgenorth collected himself—sat up in the chair as one who recovers from a stunning blow—then rose, and wiping with his handkerchief the marks of the

explosion from his face, he approached Julian, and said, in the same cold unaltered tone in which he usually expressed himself, "Young man, you have reason to bless God, who has this day saved you from the commission of a great crime."

"Bless the devil, ye crop-eared knave!" exclaimed Sir Geoffrey; "for nothing less than the father of all fanatics saved your brains from being blown about like the rinsings of Beelzebub's porridge-pot!"

"Sir Geoffrey," said Major Bridgenorth, "I have already told you, that with you I will hold no argument; for to you I am not accountable for any of my actions."

"Master Bridgenorth," said the lady, making strong effort to speak, and to speak with calmness, "whatever revenge your christian state of conscience may permit you to take on my husband—I—I, who have some right to experience compassion at your hand, for most sincerely did I compassionate you when the hand of Heaven was heavy on you—I implore you not to involve my son in our common ruin!—Let the destruc-

tion of the father and mother, with the ruin of our ancient house, satisfy your resentment for any wrong which you have ever received at my husband's hand."

"Hold your peace, housewife," said the Knight; "you speak like a fool, and meddle with what concerns you not.—Wrong at *my* hand? The cowardly knave has ever had but even too much right. Had I cudgelled the cur soundly when he first bayed at me, the cowardly mongrel had been now crouching at my feet, instead of flying at my throat. But if I get through this action, as I have got through worse weather, I will pay off old scores, as far as tough crab-tree and old iron will bear me out."

"Sir Geoffrey," replied Bridgenorth, "if the birth you boast of has made you blind to better principles, it might have at least taught you civility. What do you complain of? I am a magistrate; and I execute a warrant, addressed to me by the first authority in the state. I am a creditor also of yours; and law arms me with powers to recover my own property from the hands of an improvident debtor."

"You a magistrate!" said the Knight; "much such a magistrate as Noll was a monarch. Your heart is up, I warrant, because you have the King's pardon; and are replaced on the bench, forsooth, to persecute the poor Papist. There was never turmoil in the state, but knaves had their vantage by it—never pot boiled, but the scum was cast uppermost."

"For God's sake, my dearest husband," said Lady Peveril, "cease this wild talk! It can but incense Master Bridgenorth, who might otherwise consider, that in common charity——"

"Incense him!" said Sir Geoffrey, impatiently interrupting her; "God's-death, madam, you will drive me mad! Have you lived so long in this world, and yet expect consideration and charity from an old starved wolf like that? And if he had it, do you think that I, or you, madam, as my wife, are subjects for his charity?—Julian, my poor fellow, I am sorry thou hast come so unluckily, since thy petronel was not better loaded—but thy credit is lost for ever as a marksman."

This angry colloquy passed so rapidly on all sides, that Julian, scarce recovered from the ex-

tremity of astonishment with which he was overwhelmed at finding himself suddenly plunged into a situation of such extremity, had no time to consider in what way he could most effectually act for the succour of his parents. To speak Bridgenorth fair, seemed the more prudent course; but to this his pride could hardly stoop; yet he forced himself to say, with as much calmness as he could assume, "Master Bridgenorth, since you act as a magistrate, I desire to be treated according to the laws of England; and demand to know of what we are accused, and by whose authority we are arrested?"

"Here is another howlet for ye!" exclaimed the impetuous old Knight; "his mother speaks to a Puritan of charity; and thou must talk of law to a round-headed rebel, with a wanion to you! What warrant hath he, think ye, beyond the Parliament's or the devil's?"

"Who speaks of the Parliament?" said a person entering, whom Peveril recognized as the official person whom he had before seen at the horse-dealer's, and who now bustled in with all the conscious dignity of plenary authority,—

"Who talks of the Parliament?" he exclaimed. "I promise you, enough has been found in this house to convict twenty plotters—Here be arms, and that good store. Bring them in, Captain."

"The very same," exclaimed the Captain, approaching, "which I mention in my printed Narrative of Information, lodged before the Honourable House of Commons; they were commissioned from old Vander Huys of Rotterdam, by orders of Don John of Austria, for the service of the Jesuits."

"Now, by this light," said Sir Geoffrey, "they are the pikes, musketoons, and pistols, that have been hidden in the garret ever since Naseby-fight!"

"And here," said the Captain's yoke-fellow, Everett, "are proper priest's trappings—antiphoners, and missals, and copes, I warrant you—ay, and proper pictures too, for Papists to mutter and bow over."

"Now plague on thy snuffling whine," said Sir Geoffrey; "here is a rascal will swear my grandmother's old farthingale to be priest's vestments, and the story book of Owlenspiegel, a Popish missal!"

"But how's this, Master Bridgenorth?" said Topham, addressing the magistrate; "your honour has been as busy as we have; and you have caught another knave while we recovered these toys."

"I think, sir," said Julian, "if you look into your warrant, which, if I mistake not, names the persons whom you are directed to arrest, you will find you have no title to apprehend me."

"Sir," said the officer, puffing with importance, "I do not know who you are; but I would you were the best man in England, that I might teach you the respect due to the warrant of the House. Sir, there steps not the man within the British seas, but I will arrest him on authority of this bit of parchment; and I do arrest you accordingly.—What do you accuse him of, gentlemen?"

Dangerfield swaggered forward, and peeping under Julian's hat, "Stop my vital breath," he exclaimed, "but I have seen you before, my friend, an I could but think where; but my memory is not worth a bean, since I have been obliged to use it so much of late, in the behalf of the poor state.

But I do know the fellow; and I have seen him amongst the Papists—I'll take that on my assured damnation."

"Why, Captain Dangerfield," said the Captain's smoother, but more dangerous associate,—"verily, it is the same youth whom we saw at the horse-merchant's yesterday; and we had matter against him then, only Master Topham did not desire us to bring it out."

"Ye may bring out what ye will against him now," said Topham, "for he hath blasphemed the warrant of the House. I think ye said ye saw him somewhere?"

"Ay, verily," said Everett, "I have seen him amongst the seminary pupils at Saint Omer's—he was who but he with the regents there."

"Nay, Master Everett, collect yourself," said Topham; "for, as I think, you said you saw him at a consult of the Jesuits in London."

"It was *I* said so, Master Topham," said the undaunted Dangerfield; "and mine is the tongue that will swear it."

"Good Master Topham," said Bridgenorth, "you may suspend further inquiry at present,

as it doth but fatigue and perplex the memory of the King's witnesses."

"You are wrong, Master Bridgenorth—clearly wrong. It doth but keep them in wind—only breathes them like greyhounds before a coursing match."

"Be it so," said Bridgenorth, with his usual indifference of manner; "but at present this youth must stand committed upon a warrant, which I will presently sign, of having assaulted me while in discharge of my duty as a magistrate, for the rescue of a person legally attached. Did you not hear the report of a pistol?"

"I will swear to it," said Everett.

"And I," said Dangerfield. "While we were making search in the cellar, I heard something very like a pistol-shot; but I conceived it to be the drawing of a long-corked bottle of sack, to see whether there were any Popish reliques in the inside on't."

"A pistol-shot!" exclaimed Topham; "here might have been a second Sir Edmondbury Godfrey's matter.—Oh, thou real spawn of the red old dragon! for he too would have resisted the

House's warrant, had we not taken him something at unawares.—Master Bridgenorth, you are a judicious magistrate, and a worthy servant of the state—I would we had many such sound Protestant justices. Shall I have this young fellow away with his parents—what think you?—or will you keep him for re-examination?"

"Master Bridgenorth," said Lady Peveril, in spite of her husband's efforts to interrupt her, "for God's sake, if ever you knew what it was to love one of the many children you have lost, or her who is now left to you, do not pursue your vengeance to the blood of my poor boy! I will forgive you all the rest—all the distress you have wrought—all the yet greater misery with which you threaten us; but do not be extreme with one who never can have offended you. Believe, that if your ears are shut against the cry of a despairing mother, those which are open to the complaint of all who sorrow, will hear my petition and your answer."

The agony of mind and of voice with which Lady Peveril uttered these words, seemed to thrill through all present, though most of them were but

too much inured to such scenes. Every one was silent, when, ceasing to speak, she fixed on Bridgenorth her eyes, glistening with tears, with the eager anxiety of one whose life or death seemed to depend upon the answer to be returned. Even Bridgenorth's inflexibility seemed to be shaken; and his voice was tremulous, as he answered, "Madam, I would to God I had the present means of relieving your great distress, otherwise than by recommending to you a reliance upon Providence; and that you take heed to your spirit, that it murmur not under this crook in your lot. For me, I am but as a rod in the hand of the strong man, which smites not of itself, but because it is wielded by the arm of him who holds the same."

"Even as I and my black rod are guided by the Commons of England," said Master Topham, who seemed marvellously pleased with the illustration.

Julian now thought it time to say something in his own behalf; and he endeavoured to temper it with as much composure as it was possible for him

to assume. "Master Bridgenorth," he said, "I neither dispute your authority, nor this gentleman's warrant——"

"You do not?" said Topham. "O ho, master youngster, I thought we should bring you to your senses presently!"

"Then, if you so will it, Master Topham," said Bridgenorth, "thus it shall be. You shall set out with early day, taking with you, towards London, the persons of Sir Geoffrey and Lady Peveril; and that they may travel according to their quality, you will allow them their coach, sufficiently guarded."

"I will travel with them myself," said Topham; "for these rough Derbyshire roads are no easy riding; and my very eyes are weary with looking on these bleak hills. In the coach I can sleep as sound as if I were in the house, and Master Bodderbrains on his legs."

"It will become you so to take your ease, Master Topham," answered Bridgenorth. "For this youth, I will take him under my charge, and bring him up myself."

"I may not be answerable for that, worthy Master Bridgenorth, since he comes within the warrant of the House."

"Nay, but," said Bridgenorth, "he is only under custody for an assault, with the purpose of a rescue; and I counsel you against meddling with him, unless you have stronger guard. Sir Geoffrey is now old and broken, but this young fellow is in the flower of his youth, and hath at his beck all the debauched young Cavaliers of the neighbourhood—You will scarce cross the country without a rescue."

Topham eyed Julian wistfully, as a spider may be supposed to look upon a stray wasp which has got into his web, and which he longs to secure, though he fears the consequences of attempting him.

Julian himself replied, "I know not if this separation be well or ill meant on your part, Master Bridgenorth; but on mine, I am only desirous to share the fate of my parents; and therefore I will give my word of honour to attempt neither rescue nor escape, on condition you do not separate me from them."

"Do not say so, Julian," said his mother; "abide with Master Bridgenorth—my mind tells me he cannot mean so ill by us as his rough conduct would now lead us to infer."

"And I," said Sir Geoffrey, "know, that between the doors of my father's house and the gates of hell, there steps not such a villain on the ground! And if I wish my hands ever to be unbound again, it is because I hope for one downright blow at a grey head, that has hatched more treason than the whole Long Parliament."

"Away with thee," said the zealous officer; "is Parliament a word for so foul a mouth as thine?—Gentlemen," he added, turning to Everett and Dangerfield, "you will bear witness to this."

"To his having reviled the House of Commons—by G—d, that I will!" said Dangerfield; "I will take it on my damnation."

"And verily," said Everett, "as he spoke of Parliament generally, he hath contemned the House of Lords also."

"Why, ye poor insignificant wretches," said Sir Geoffrey, "whose very life is a lie—and

whose bread is perjury—would you pervert my innocent words almost as soon as they have quitted my lips? I tell you the country is well weary of you; and should Englishmen come to their senses, the jail, the pillory, the whipping-post, and the gibbet, will be too good preferment for such base bloodsuckers. And now, Master Bridgenorth, you and they may do your worst; for I will not open my mouth to utter a single word while I am in the company of such knaves."

"Perhaps, Sir Geoffrey," answered Bridgenorth, "you would better have consulted your own safety in adopting that resolution a little sooner—the tongue is a little member, but it causes much strife.—You, Master Julian, will please to follow me, and without remonstrance or resistance, for you must be aware that I have the means of compelling."

Julian was, indeed, but too sensible that he had no other course but that of submission to superior force; but ere he left the apartment, he kneeled down to receive his father's blessing, which the old man bestowed not without a tear in his eye, and in the emphatic words, "God

bless thee, my boy; and keep thee good and true to Church and King, whatever wind shall bring foul weather."

His mother was only able to pass her hand over his head, and to implore him, in a low tone of voice, not to be rash or violent in any attempt to render them assistance. "We are innocent," she said, "my son—we are innocent—and we are in God's hands. Be the thought our best comfort and protection."

Bridgenorth now signed to Julian to follow him, which he did, accompanied, or rather conducted, by the two guards who had first disarmed him. When they had passed from the apartment, and were at the door of the outward hall, Bridgenorth asked Julian whether he would consider himself as under parole; in which case, he said, he would dispense with all other security but his own promise.

Peveril, who could not help hoping somewhat from the favourable and unresentful manner in which he was treated by one whose life he had so recently attempted, replied, without hesitation, that he would give his parole for twenty-four

hours, neither to attempt to escape by force nor by flight.

"It is wisely said," replied Bridgenorth; "for though you might cause bloodshed, be assured that your utmost efforts could do no service to your parents.—Horses there—horses to the court-yard!"

The trampling of the horses was soon heard; and in obedience to Bridgenorth's signal, and in compliance with his promise, Julian mounted one which was presented to him, and prepared to leave the house of his fathers, in which his parents were now prisoners, and to go, he knew not whither, under the custody of one known to be the ancient enemy of his race. He was rather surprised at observing, that Bridgenorth and he were about to travel without any other attendants.

When they were mounted, and as they rode slowly towards the outer-gate of the court-yard, Bridgenorth said to him, "It is not every one who would thus unreservedly commit his safety, by travelling at night, and unaided, with the hot-brained youth who so lately attempted his life."

"Master Bridgenorth," said Julian, "I might tell you truly, that I knew you not at the time when I directed my weapon against you; but I must also add, that the cause in which I used it, might have rendered me, even had I known you, a slight respecter of your person. At present, I do know you; and have neither malice against your person, nor the liberty of a parent to fight for. Besides, you have my word; and when was a Peveril known to break it?"

"Ay," replied his companion, "a Peveril—a Peveril of the Peak!—a name which has long sounded like a war-trumpet in the land; but which has now perhaps sounded its last loud note. Look back, young man, on the darksome turrets of your father's house, which uplift themselves as proudly on the brow of the hill, as their owners raised themselves above the sons of their people. Think upon your father, a captive—yourself, in some sort, a fugitive—your light quenched—your glory abased—your estate wrecked and impoverished. Think that Providence has subjected the destinies of the race of Peveril to one, whom, in their

aristocratic pride, they held as a plebeian upstart. Think of this; and when you again boast of your ancestry, remember, that he who raiseth the lowly can also abase the high in heart."

Julian did indeed gaze for an instant, with a swelling heart, upon the dimly-seen turrets of his paternal mansion, on which poured the moonlight, mixed with long shadows of the towers and trees. But while he sadly acknowledged the truth of Bridgenorth's observation, he felt indignant at his ill-timed triumph. "If fortune had followed worth," he said, "the Castle of Martindale, and the name of Peveril, had afforded no room for their enemy's vain glorious boast. But those who have stood high on Fortune's wheel, must abide by the consequence of its revolutions. Thus much I will at least say for my father's house, that it has not stood unhonoured; nor will it fall—if it is to fall—unlamented. Forbear, then, if you are indeed the Christian you call yourself, to exult in the misfortunes of others, or to confide in your own prosperity. If the light of our House be now quenched, God can rekindle it in his own good time."

Peveril broke off in extreme surprise; for as he spoke the last words, the bright red beams of the family beacon began again to glimmer from its wonted watch-tower, chequering the pale moon-beam with a ruddier glow. Bridgenorth also gazed on this unexpected illumination with surprise, and not, as it seemed, without disquietude. "Young man," he resumed, "it can scarcely be but what Heaven intends to work great things by your hand, so singularly has that augury followed on your words."

So saying, he put his horse once more into motion; and looking back, from time to time, as if to assure himself that the beacon of the Castle was actually rekindled, he led the way through the well-known paths and alleys, to his own house of Moultrassie, followed by Peveril, who, although sensible that the light might be altogether accidental, could not but receive as a good omen an event so intimately connected with the traditions and usages of his family.

They alighted at the hall-door, which was hastily opened by a female; and while the deep tone of Bridgenorth called on the groom to take their

horses, the well-known voice of his daughter Alice was heard to exclaim in thanksgiving to God, who had restored her father in safety.

END OF VOLUME SECOND.

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